# The Changing Language Roles and Linguistic Identities of the Kashmiri Speech Community

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By

M. Ashraf Bhat

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*Identity is a concept of our age that should be used very carefully. All types of identities, ethnic, national, religious, sexual or whatever else can become your prison after a while. The identity that you stand up for can enslave you and close you to the rest of the world.*
*—Murathan Mungan [Turkish poet]*

*So, if you really want to hurt me, talk badly about my language. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself.*
*—Anzaldúa*

*Speakers construct their identities by careful choice of the appropriate linguistic features that will convey the specific social information that identifies them as part of a particular speech community.*
*—Joseph John*

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# PREFACE

Implicitly or explicitly, every individual is associated with a repertoire of identities, which include the personal, gender, social, linguistic, regional, national, racial, cultural, ethnic, and religious identities. These multiple categories form a person's 'repertoire of social identities'. Within this, some identity assertions are more prominently observable and effective than others. For instance, linguistic identity is the most overtly observable phenomenon, and various other identities are articulated and positioned through it. From a linguistic perspective, identity does not emerge at a single analytical level of language (vowel quality, code choice, ideological structure) but simultaneously operates at multiple levels. When associated with other forms of discourse, such as religion, culture, nation, ethnicity, and race, language-identity statements become stronger. For many researchers, the study of language as an interactional discourse demonstrates that parameters such as gender, ethnicity, religion, and class are not constants that can be taken for granted; rather, they are communicatively produced. In other words, language mediates individual and social identities. In our everyday life, if we observe carefully, most of our roles and statements are conscious or unconscious assertions of identity statements. Each identity a person takes on is associated with a number of approximate verbal and non-verbal forms of expression. Identity, in terms of time, space, and context, is always in multiplicity. For instance, a resident of India can simultaneously be Indian, Punjabi, male, Hindu, a doctor, and so on.

In multilingual spaces like India—with 1652 mother tongues—where the identity assertion of an individual is mostly dominated by linguistic discourses, the significance of linguistic identities has not been studied thoroughly. Apart from several grand narratives of linguistic-identity statements, I have come across several such contexts that helped me contemplate the essence of correlation between our daily lives and linguistic-identity statements. I recall four such incidents that illustrate a strong language-identity correlation. First, in April 2003, I boarded a train from Aligarh (a small town in Uttar Pradesh, India), where I was a student of linguistics at Aligarh Muslim University. The ticket checker asked me for my ticket; after looking at it, he asked me to pay a fine, for I had boarded the wrong train. However, I argued (in English), "It's night

time—I didn't realise I'd boarded the wrong train". He abruptly retorted in Hindi, "*Agar angrez ho to* AC (air-conditioned) coach *mein kyon nahin ho*" (if you are an Englishman, why don't you travel in an air-conditioned coach), as I was travelling in a non-AC sleeper coach, which is cheaper than an AC coach. His argument was a clear example of a linguistic-identity statement. What he (implicitly) meant is that those who speak English belong to the upper-middle-class and can thus afford to travel in AC coaches. This made me think about the importance of the assertion of linguistic identities in the making and unmaking of groups, and about the categorization of people into different socioeconomic categories on the basis of their linguistic assertions. Second, a friend of mine from Delhi (the capital of India) once jokingly told me, *"Aap Kashmiri log na dil se bhaarat bolte ho na zuban se bolte ho"*, which meant, 'you Kashmiris say the word *bhaarat* (India) neither properly nor sincerely', drawing attention to the word's initial aspirated sound [bʱ] that native Kashmiri speakers cannot pronounce properly. Instead of *bʰarat*, Kashmiri speakers pronounce it *barat*. Nonetheless, the issue of such identity assertion is confined not just to an anecdote but is sometimes more intricate than we imagine it to be. Third, in June 2008, my friend and I visited the Srinagar campus of the University of Kashmir. Throughout the way, we spoke in Kashmiri. However, as soon as we entered the gate, he switched to Urdu. Surprised, I asked him why he had done so, to which he replied, "The people here will treat us as illiterate villagers if we continue in Kashmiri". Fourth, while waiting with his mother for his school bus, a child kept insisting on eating chocolate. His mother refused as he had asked for it in Kashmiri and told him to make the request in Urdu, instead. These instances, along with many other overt and covert linguistic-identity articulations, forcefully drew my attention to the importance of understanding the notion of linguistic identities in multilingual contexts.

National language development studies have shown an intricate relationship between national and sub-national identities. This debate is of particularly high relevance in the Indian context because the states were reconstructed, after gaining independence, mainly on a linguistic basis. Globally, national languages have played a foundational role in the formation of national identities. For example, Germany is not only the name of a territory—the people who live there are supposed to speak the language as well. There have been different approaches to understanding the historical relationship and roles of language(s) in the process of national identity formation. Some nationalists believe that if people do not know their language, they cannot understand their nation, which they claim is a state of 'national unconsciousness'. Joseph's description of standard languages and

non-standard languages (notions of correct and incorrect ways of using language) shows how these arise in connection with national identity and go on to play an important role in the lives of individuals by formalising hierarchies of class-based and education-based norms of usage, on the basis of which each of us is judged. Similarly, the link between language and ethnic identity is also obvious, as language is considered the main symbolic system of the human species. Language is used both as a symbolic system and as a basis for grouping individuals. Some people consider language the primary indicator and expression of ethnicity.

The assertion and articulation of linguistic-identity statements, and their consequent language-identity conflicts, can lead to confrontations between individuals, groups, or communities. The history of linguistic conflicts, particularly in multilingual and multicultural nations, has shown how strong language-identity statements are and how they can be a basis for extreme discord between diverse linguistic groups. The conflict within varieties of the same language—such as standard versus non-standard, dialect versus language, where the argument continues as to whose variety is standard and/or non-standard, and whose variety is a language and whose is a dialect of the same language—is purely an identity statement. Similarly, within multilingual spaces, conflicts among speakers of different languages underlie identity assertion statements. Sometimes, language-identity differences are combined with other group markers, such as religion, which intensifies the conflict among speakers of different languages as they assert their diverse identities. In extreme cases, it can lead to division, separatism, and the formation of new groups and nations. For example, the language-based conflicts in multilingual societies like India, or the separation and formation of Bangladesh, are partly based on linguistic conflict. Thus, this clearly shows how strong and sensitive the language-identity linkage is and how it can contribute to peace and war among groups, communities, and nations.

Several researchers have expounded a number of important theoretical positions and have made it possible to see the various positions adopted by individual authors towards understanding linguistic identities. The aim of this volume is to underline some of the parameters of inquiry, which must motivate the next wave of empirical studies to understand the role of linguistic identities in multilingual contexts.

The present work, ‘The Changing Language Roles and Linguistic Identities of the Kashmiri Speech Community’, is based on the premise that linguistic identities are important because they make sense to people, are meaningful, and have due impact on the thinking and behaviour of individuals and groups, overtly and covertly, by responding to the various

forms of discourse—socio-political, economic, religious, and cultural—in a speech community. The book takes into account all discourses and those contexts that provide any space for the assertion of linguistic identities. It provides an overview of the various theoretical positions of identity, and it draws together insights from interdisciplinary positions, such as Sociolinguistics, Linguistic Anthropology, Discourse Analysis, Cognitive Sciences, and Social Psychology. The framework outlined in the book synthesises key works on linguistic identity to offer a general socio-cultural, cognitive, and linguistic perspective on identity. It tenders a thorough treatment of various crucial and significant issues concerning linguistic identity.

It is important to note that among the repertoire of identities, linguistic identity is the most overtly observable attribute through which various identifications—such as geographical background, social origin, level of education, gender, intelligence, ethnicity, age, and affability—are positioned and articulated. As noted by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, every speech act is perceived as an 'act of identity' and a single phonemic feature may be sufficient to include or exclude somebody from any social group. Accordingly, this book primarily aims at investigating the linguistic assertions of community identity in the multilingual context of the Kashmiri speech community. It does so by focusing on the dimensions of changing language roles and linguistic practices. It employs the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and multiple sources of data, which provide space for the implicit/explicit assertion of linguistic identities. The book explicates the crucial factors—script uncertainty, interlingual diglossia, language policies of the state, collective attitudes, the separatist movement, intergenerational transmission, attrition, and literary, religious, and media discourse—that are accountable for reshaping the roles of different languages and that subsequently result in the transition of linguistic identities. The book also illustrates how instrumental orientation and integrative motivation are engaged for Urdu, in terms of prestige, identity, mobility, and advancement, whereas for English, the acceptability is largely instrumental in nature, and for Kashmiri, it is merely that of symbolic reification. Within this framework, the book measures the nature and extent of Kashmiri language attrition among a non-pathological population. Finally, it demonstrates that attrition, loss, changes in role, and shift of language are principally motivated by various linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, which may lead to the demise of the distinct symbol and last roots of *Kashmiryat*—the Kashmiri linguistic-cultural identity—in favour of the non-native code, Urdu, which might emerge as the primary linguistic identity in the near future.

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# AUTHOR'S NOTE ON DOCUMENTATION

- This manuscript (including the main text referencing and bibliography) is closely formatted in adherence to Joseph Gibaldi's MLA Handbook: Sixth Edition, New Delhi: Affiliated East-West Press, 2004.

- Standard British spelling is followed throughout the main text. However, American spellings are retained inside quotations or references.

- The phonetic symbols used in the book are on par with the IPA.

- In order to view the figures/tables in a full form on a single page and to avoid breaking a single figure/table into two different pages, parts of some of the pages have been left blank.

# INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Language is a great force of socialisation, a symbol of social solidarity, and is inherently involved in the process of socialisation itself. The relationship between language and identity is an intriguing one, partly because debates on theories of language are as inconclusive and indeterminate as debates on theories of identity. Tabouret-Keller (1997) eloquently stresses that war and peace cannot be understood if the powerful role of identities is ignored and that identities have a part to play in the continuation of war and peace. Sometimes, in the identification of enemies, certain identity markers are attributed to an entire population. Social identity is present in language itself. Language and social identity studies are indeed aimed at solving broad social problems by identifying obstacles to communication that occur among people whose social identities differ.

Language is the only medium through which individuals and groups conceptualise the 'grammar of culture'. For example, a child learns to be male or female, an English or Hindi speaker, Muslim or Christian, and to alienate himself/herself from the roles that he/she is not supposed to perform within a certain culture and context. During the complex process of socialisation, a child not only learns the lexicon but also the communicative competence and articulation of identities. Thus, acquiring a language not only comprises learning lexical items but also one's identity in varying social environments.

The name of a language itself identifies and relates it to other features of the group who speak that language. The historical identification of languages such as Chinese, English, Arabic, and Hindi has always been closely connected with the establishment of a national, ethnic, or religious identity. In fact, linguistic-identity statements become more powerful when combined with ethnic, social, and religious groups. The relationship between language and identity becomes more visible in the presence of resistance and discrimination. In an intra-group language contact situation, language-identity issues become more significant for examination.

Linguistic identity, within the aggregation of identities, is the most evidently observable characteristic through which various identifications are articulated and positioned. There is an impressive body of literature that points to the central importance of the language-identity nexus and

that holds that language and identity are ultimately inseparable. The language-identity nexus, as remarked by Tabouret-Keller (1997), is often so strong that a single phonemic feature may be substantial enough to include/exclude somebody from any social group or to identify someone's membership in a given group. Therefore, it has become imperative to conceptualise the role and dynamics of identities. It may be argued that identity, whether religious, state, cultural, or linguistic, has always been used as a means of classification in the construction of hierarchy. Hence, one of the important dimensions of identification is social stratification; and, thereby, the making and unmaking of groups.

The present volume is based on the premise that linguistic identities are important as they make sense to people, are meaningful, and have due impact on the thinking and behaviour of individuals and groups, overtly and covertly. Debates on theories and issues of language are as inconclusive and indeterminate as those on theories and issues of identity. Within this context, in recent years, linguistic identity research has become increasingly significant among various disciplines, including Sociolinguistics, Linguistic Anthropology, Discourse Analysis, Cognitive Sciences, and Social Psychology. Language per se has been considered an important constituent of cultural, socio-economic, religious, and national-identity projects. Significantly, literary movements, modernisation processes, religious movements, democratisation, state-formation processes, and cultural autonomy movements have all engaged language as an intrinsic tool and as a marker of identity to achieve certain goals.

Linguistic identities cannot be studied in isolation, nor can they be abstracted from wider socio-economic, political, religious, and cultural contexts and discourse. Therefore, the book takes into account all those contexts that provide space for the implicit or explicit assertion of linguistic identities. It examines the nature of changing language roles in the Kashmiri speech community—not as a single independent variable but as a combination of several factors. These include script uncertainty, interlingual diglossia, language attrition, language policies of the state, collective attitudes towards language(s), corresponding speech communities, the separatist movement, intergenerational transmission, instrumental orientation and integrative motivation, and literary, religious, and media discourse.

Primarily, it aims at understanding linguistic assertions of community identity in the multilingual context of the Kashmir region in India, by studying the dimensions of changing language roles and linguistic practices in relation to the process of creating and maintaining new linguistic identities under different circumstances.

All research on language and identity starts from the position that identities make sense and that they are meaningful. Language-identity research is not a single entity or even just a correlation between linguistic identity and an individual/group. Rather, it is a complex link that takes into account other related features too. Joseph has rightly pointed out that language-identity research takes into account all those features of verbalisations that listeners use in order to discern a speaker's characteristics, including geographical background, social origin, and level of education, gender, intelligence, ethnicity, age, and affability. The study of the changing roles of different languages and the impact of this on identity in a speech community cannot be separated from other important social factors; it should not be seen as a single dependent variable influenced by a combination of other features that are seen as independent variables. In other words, attempts to intervene on behalf of a single feature are not likely to succeed. Thus, the book discusses the nature of changing language roles in the Kashmiri speech community, not as a single independent variable but as the combination of other relevant factors without which any kind of language-identity study would not only be incomplete but impossible.

This book assesses transitional linguistic identities and changing language roles in the Kashmiri speech community, as well as the process of creating and maintaining new linguistic identities under different circumstances. Changing language roles and its impact on linguistic identity cannot be assessed if treated in isolation and without studying all the related factors that have contributed to contemporary conditions in the Kashmiri speech community. Thus, the book examines various factors that are triggering changes in the language roles of the Kashmiri speech community and the impact of these changes on linguistic identities.

Language contact situations are interesting cases to study linguistic identities. Moreover, most language-related problems occur because of language contact. Language contact is an outcome of various macro-level factors (economic, social, political, religious, cultural, and environmental) and micro-level factors (age, gender, education, occupation, and residence). The Urdu-Kashmiri language contact situation has existed for a long time; thus, studying linguistic identities in contemporary Kashmir is ideal. There are a few studies on language attitudes and language shift in the Kashmiri speech community, but no serious attempt has been made to study the consequences of the language contact situation on the identity of the Kashmiri speech community.

In a speech community, language contact situations result in changing languages roles, which eventually leads to code-switching, code-mixing,

bi-/multi-lingualism, and ultimately, language shift and linguistic identity transition. In language contact situations, even bilingualism is sometimes replaced with dominant language monolingualism. When a language ceases to have monoglots, the process of decline has often occurred. The book also examines the nature, rate, and extent of code-alternation and bi-/multi-lingualism in the Kashmiri speech community and their impact on the social and linguistic identities of the people.

Age is considered an important sociolinguistic variable. It is argued that older people usually resist change and thus retain older varieties of language, as compared to younger generations. The book tries to explore the nature of language use, language shift, language attitudes, and their correlations with different age groups among the Kashmiri speech community. The most familiar process through which language roles change and ultimately lead to a shift is the lack of transmission of a given language from parents to children. That is precisely what happened in the linguistic context of Ireland. The book takes into account such paradigms and attempts to find out if such a situation prevails in the contemporary Kashmiri speech community.

Sociolinguistic approaches have also been employed in language and gender research in an attempt to identify systematic differences between men and women's use of language. General linguistic evidence suggests that women are more likely to be favourably disposed towards prestigious varieties. Given women's traditionally close role with children, this can be an important factor in language decline due to contact with languages of higher status. The book also discusses the nature of language behaviour of the women in the Kashmiri speech community and attempts to understand how this has affected the language behaviour of younger generations.

Similarly, available literature shows that differences exist in the communication patterns, language behaviour, language usage, and attitudes of people from different backgrounds (rural versus urban), different income groups, and different occupations. Thus, this volume attempts to examine the differences and correlations in the language patterns, behaviour, and usage of people from rural and urban settings, various income groups, and occupations.

In most cases, education systems and schooling patterns have been observed to be less favourable to linguistic pluralism and linguistic diversity, while giving some varieties more preference over others. In some language contact situations, the decline of the first language is most affected by the educational system and schools, where the emphasis is on a language that is not the mother tongue or the first language, by using it as the medium of both education and instruction.

In fact, in any education system, less powerful languages are not supported, encouraged, or saved. However, powerful languages used in schools threaten these less powerful languages. For example, in the case of the Irish language, the Catholic clergy and the national schools killed it. The language employed as the medium of education and instruction is often associated with prestige and with the promise of prosperity and economic growth. The book investigates the statuses of Urdu, English, and Kashmiri as mediums of instruction and education. It also examines the impact and correlation of the medium of instruction and education with the maintenance, shift, and attitudinal patterns of various languages. Further, it investigates the role of education and of the schooling system in the maintenance or shift of languages, and the consequent impact on identity.

According to Spolsky's (1989) sociolinguistic theory of second language learning, the social context is relevant to language learning in terms of: identifying the attitudes and goals of the learner that lead to motivation; and, determining the learning opportunities, whether formal (e.g., educational) or informal, provided by those who interact linguistically with the learner. The home provides a rich environment for language learning, and it is considered a relatively more suitable context for language acquisition and usage. In the matter of language maintenance or shift, the home context can promote or impede language maintenance. In a multilingual setting, changes in the language acquisition contexts explicitly indicate changing language roles of a speech community in accordance with the prestige associated with a specific code. Thus, the book specifically studies the nature of the changing acquisition contexts of the spoken and written forms of communication of the speech community. Language roles and the functional perspective of language usage illustrate that in practice, people use diverse codes for different requirements—counting, thinking, story-telling, arguing, praying, kinship-calling, and dreaming. The book evaluates the roles played by different codes for such functional aspects.

In addition to other factors, script and literacy can also play an important role in changing the language roles (oral practices) from indigenous varieties to other standard varieties. Therefore, the present volume explores the nature of exo (or interlingual) diglossia (or biglossia) between the written and spoken varieties of language in the Kashmiri speech community. Further, the study focuses on the role of literacy and on the impact of reading and writing on the language roles in the Kashmiri speech community and the consequent effect of this on linguistic identities.

Communicative and symbolic (enacted) aspects of language are separable, which has been observed in the case of the Irish language, where most people valued the language as a 'symbol of national or ethnic identity' or as a 'symbol of cultural distinctiveness'. However, in terms of actual language practice, they were using a different language. When it comes to symbolic reification, actual language behaviour and practices are different from reported behaviour, where one language is used for actual communicative, instrumental, and integrative purposes, while the other is employed for symbolic or integrative purposes only. There is a distinction between language being used for identity in a representative sense and in a symbolic sense. The book makes an effort to gauge whether a similar situation prevails in the contemporary Kashmiri speech community.

The shift from one variety to another becomes more problematic when one variety is associated with positive attitudes, while the other is perceived as inadequate and has negative connotations. This kind of linguistic scenario further strengthens the use of the variety that is associated with positive attitudes, and weakens the position and discourages the use of the variety linked with negative attitudes and stereotypes. Attitudes and the consequent motivation (integrative and instrumental) play significant roles in the maintenance and shift of language(s). The perception of and attitude towards a language have practical implications for motivating speakers to maintain or shift from one code to another. Positive attitudes (both integrative and instrumental) towards a language and the speakers of it significantly motivate speakers to accommodate such languages. Similarly, negative attitudes towards a language or its speakers discourage people to use it, which ultimately lead to language shift/loss and linguistic divergence or convergence.

The book takes into account the hypothesis that in the Kashmiri speech community, language roles do not change merely because of the negative connotations and stereotypes associated with the Kashmiri language but also because of the status and prestige associated with Urdu, which attracts people to use it for various integrative and instrumental purposes.

Intergenerational transmission may be viewed as the key component of and/or primary reason for the maintenance of a language. In other words, for the survival of any language, its transmission to future generations is essential. Nevertheless, transmission depends mainly on the attitudes, motivation, and promise for growth and prosperity. This work also explores the attitudes and willingness of the Kashmiri speech community towards the intergenerational transmission of the Kashmiri language.

The media plays a significant role in the maintenance of a language, and it helps shape and re-shape people's world-views and attitudes

towards specific codes. The language of the mass media is considered a superior, standard, and formal variety that shapes and reshapes the attitudes of the masses. The language used by the media has its due impact on the minds of the audience. Thus, from a sociolinguistic position, one would ask: in which languages do the people choose to listen to/watch radio/TV programmes and read newspapers? The book also investigates the role of media (print and electronic) discourse and its effect on the language use and changing language roles of the Kashmiri speech community.

Attrition, which is the process of language loss, is considered the first step towards language shift, loss, and its impact on the language ecology of a speech community. This volume examines language attrition—mainly, the loss of words for objects that are not culturally relevant anymore, and the consequent compensation for the loss of the native lexicon by borrowing from the dominant language. The book focuses mainly on L1 attrition in an L1 environment and on the role of some significant factors responsible for it, particularly, the influence of L2 (Urdu/English). It measures the extent of lexical attrition and reduction of basic vocabulary, as well as the attrition of Kashmiri idiomatic expressions and proverbs.

This work is the first of its kind to establish such a link between language contact, language shift, attrition, and identity, substantiated with data. It discusses the nature and extent of attrition in (the non-pathological population of) the Kashmiri speech community. In addition, it investigates the resultant language shift and loss, which may eventually trigger the complete deterioration and loss of the Kashmiri language and of the identity associated with it. The discussion on language attrition in this book gains even more significance because of the nature of the existing studies on language attrition, wherein most of them have been carried out on immigrants and in the immigrant context alone.

Since the focus of this research is the study of the linguistic identities of the Kashmiri speech community, it briefly discusses the historical and linguistic scenario of the speech community, the state's language policies, and the methodology adopted to explore all of this. It explains how the people of Kashmir recognise Urdu as the language of economic opportunity and power. It analyses the factors that led to the acceptance of Urdu, a non-native language, as the dominant language of education, media, religion, administration, and politics. Moreover, the present effort also takes into account the influence of script and literacy in other important discourse, such as signboards, the judiciary, and police and revenue records. The other major factors—including religious discourse,

the state's language policies, and the role of the separatist movement— in the promotion and growth of Urdu in Kashmir are also significantly illustrated.

The book focuses mainly on the crucial issue of how the roles of different languages are changing under several influences, which is ultimately leading to a transition of linguistic identities in contemporary Kashmir. The assumption is that the roles of different languages are changing in all contexts and spheres of life in the Kashmiri speech community, and the book thus addresses the major question: "Can Urdu emerge as the locus of people's primary identity in the years ahead?" Other assertions the book seeks to comprehend are: (i) to explore the role of background characteristics and of various socio-economic, political, and religious factors in changing the roles of languages among the Kashmiri speech community; (ii) to analyse the reasons that motivated the acceptance and recognition of Urdu, a non-native language, as the dominant language of education, media, administration, politics, economic opportunity, power, and religious discourse; (iii) to study the nature and extent of exo (interlingual) diglossia or biglossia in the Kashmiri speech community by discussing the impact of Urdu education, writing/orthography, and literacy; (iv) to study the impact of language shift on the linguistic, cultural, and social identities of Kashmiris; (v) to examine changes in the language behaviour and language practices of the speech community in various domains; which includes exploring the knowledge of self-reported language skills and self-asserted linguistic identities of the speech community, as well as measuring the nature and extent of language attrition among the speech community, specifically with respect to vocabulary, and idiomatic expressions and proverbs; (vi) to understand the role of language loyalty, identity formation, attitudes, and motivation for convergence and divergence; and, (viii) to estimate the future of language(s) by examining the attitudes and motivation to transfer the given languages to future generations, which includes surmising the fate of Kashmiri identity; (ix) to assess if Urdu can emerge as the primary identity of the people in the future, and (x) what consequences can it have for Kashmiri society and culture.

The book comprises six chapters. **The first chapter, 'Identity: Significance of Linguistic Identities'**, provides an overview of various theoretical positions on identity, and draws together insights from interdisciplinary positions to thoroughly comprehend the issue of linguistic identity. The framework outlined in this chapter synthesises key works on linguistic-identity research to offer a general socio-cultural, cognitive, and linguistic perspective on identity. The chapter offers a

comprehensive treatment of various significant questions, such as the nature of language-identity linkage, the process of socialisation of linguistic identities, and the essentialist and constructionist approaches to identity. It examines linguistic nationalism, first language identity, and identity assertion at different levels, interlingual diglossia, linguicide, linguistic human rights, and some of the significant concerns of language attitude studies. The dimensions of language attrition, its causes, and its role in language and identity shift have been debated systematically and eloquently. Finally, the chapter highlights the methodology, nature, and scope of the present study, followed by a brief summary of the main objectives of the study.

The second chapter, **'The Kashmiri Speech Community: Linguistic Perspective'**, conceptualises the socio-historical and linguistic backgrounds of the speech community under investigation. It focuses mainly on the diverse theoretical and controversial positions pertaining to the origin of the Kashmiri people and of their language. The chapter conscientiously summarises several important aspects of the Kashmiri language, especially, its historical development, evolution, and some exceptionally debated controversial issues, such as genealogical classification and script uncertainty. Further, it delineates the nature of the dialectal survey of the Kashmiri language. It further attempts to provide an explanation for the various factors (including the social, cultural, attitudinal, literary, religious, and media discourse) responsible for creating a persuasive space for the acceptance, growth, and maintenance of Urdu—not only as the language of the masses but also as the state's official language, devoid of any resistance.

The third chapter, **'Changing Linguistic Practices: A Functional Perspective'** explores the dimensions of changing language roles, linguistic behaviour, and language practices in the multilingual context of the Kashmiri speech community from various functional perspectives, and subsequently investigates their impact on linguistic identities. The usage of language varieties or codes varies according to the context and primary group affiliation of the speaker with respect to crucial reference points such as class, region, religion, gender, age, socio-economic background, and education. These reference points heavily shape speech such that speakers inevitably signal much about their social identity, even when verbalizing common expressions. In this framework, the chapter examines the nature of interchanging acquisition contexts of the spoken and written forms of communication; the usage of language(s) in different domains, such as educational and religious discourse; and, the use of codes for different requirements, such as counting, thinking, story-telling, arguing,

kinship-calling, and intrapersonal functional activities like thinking, praying, and dreaming. Thus, the chapter substantiates the argument that crucial roles have been played by literacy practices, interlingual diglossia, and orthography in changing language roles and in the consequent divergence and shift of language, which ultimately led to the transition of linguistic identities in Kashmir with a spillover effect on other identities.

The fourth chapter, **'Language Preferences: Attitudes, Motivation, and Identity Assertion',** analyses the roles played by attitudinal and motivational factors in maintaining or shifting languages. Language shift, according to Edwards, often reflects the pragmatic desires for social mobility and an improved standard of living. In this context, the chapter discusses language attitudes, motivation, and their implications for language maintenance and language shift among the Kashmiri speech community. It also focuses on the intergenerational transmission of languages by exploring which language(s) respondents would like their children to be educated in and which one(s) they would like them to learn as their first and second languages. Finally, the chapter analyses the dimensions of linguistic identities, that is, the language with which respondents would like to identify themselves when within and when outside Kashmir.

The chapter clearly illustrates how instrumental orientation and integrative motivation are engaged in speaking Urdu, in terms of prestige, identity, mobility, and advancement; whereas with English, the acceptability is largely instrumental in nature, and with Kashmiri it is merely that of symbolic reification**.** In addition to socio-cultural factors (status, wealth, politics, and power), demographic factors (size and distribution of the group), and institutional support factors (media, education, government, etc.) also determine language preferences, attitudes, and motivation. In the Kashmir of today, all factors seem to favour the promotion of a non-native code—Urdu (and to some extent, English), which does not indicate a secure future for Kashmiri, and consequently, the associated linguistic identity.

The fifth chapter, **'Language Attrition and Linguistic Identities'** presents the dimensions of attrition of the L1 (Kashmiri, in the present case) and its impact on language shift, loss, and linguistic identity. Language attrition was primarily studied from a pathological perspective in people with aphasia, but the term was later extended to cover non-pathological cases of language loss. Within a larger framework, it includes all other phenomenon of L1/L2 acquisition, bilingualism, language use/choice, code-switching, code-mixing, and language attitudes. Nevertheless, only a limited number of studies have probed L1 attrition

with reference to self and identity. Therefore, the chapter discusses the theoretical, empirical, linguistic, and extra-linguistic factors related to attrition. Specifically, it investigates the loss and attrition of the Kashmiri lexicon, proverbs and idiomatic expressions, nursery rhymes, and culture-specific notions, and the consequences of this for linguistic identity. It attempts to contribute to the field of primary language attrition in a non-pathological population, in the multilingual context of the Kashmiri speech community.

Based on empirical evidence, the chapter emphasises the fact that among the different linguistic/grammatical structures, lexicon is the most vulnerable to attrition, which makes it difficult to retrieve after a certain period. Attrition, according to the findings, is the result of a shift in any bilingual situation where one language is perceived as more prestigious than the other is. Finally, the chapter concludes that the outcome of attrition is not only a threat to the Kashmiri language and identity but also to its cultural ethos.

The sixth and final chapter, **'Conclusion: Summary and Discussion**', offers an overall analysis of the main findings of the study. It begins with a conceptual framework of the study and a statement of objectives. The section that follows discusses the major findings of the study and explains the consequent shift, divergence, and transition of identity. It also discusses some of the crucial contemporary language-identity conflicts, specifically, the issues pertaining to the linguistic-cultural identity of the Kashmiri speech community in the contexts of the two-decade-old separatist movement and of the media, religious, and literary discourses. At the end, the chapter presents some of the limitations of the book and suggests some directions for future researchers interested in this area.

# CHAPTER ONE

# IDENTITY: SIGNIFICANCE OF LINGUISTIC IDENTITIES

## 1.1. Understanding Identity[ies]

The contemporary world is characterised by communication, information technology, globalisation, and multiculturalism, which are concomitant to diverse socio-cultural conditions, multifarious life patterns, and equally incoherent, unstable, and constantly changing identities and amalgamations of cultures and languages. Hence, it is imperative to conceptualise the essence, dynamics, and role of identities. Identities are indeed very important and meaningful, and they persuade the thinking and behaviour of individuals and groups, overtly and covertly. In recent times, the concept of identity has undergone mercurial shifts, which many scholars attribute to a crisis of identity. Scholars working in the social sciences and humanities have tried to explore various questions concerning identity from a multidisciplinary perspective. Language has significant meaning within this new milieu, as it represents a powerful and flexible medium for the assertion of identity against cultural homogenisation. Highlighting the significance of linguistic identities, the novelist Khaled Hosseini notes, "If culture is a house, then language is the key to the front door and to all the rooms inside. Without it, you end up wayward, without a proper home or a legitimate identity". Languages are a means through which various identifications are articulated and positioned. S. During (1995) asserts, "...in both literature and politics, the postcolonial drive towards identity centres around language, partly because in postmodernity, identity is barely available elsewhere" (125-126). Andrée Tabouret-Keller (1997) eloquently highlights the importance of linguistic identities and emphasises that "language itself can function as a symbol for which some are ready to die or kill" (319).

Yet, the diverse debates on theories and issues of language are as inconclusive and indeterminate as the debates on theories and issues of identity. In this context, recently, research on linguistic identities has

become increasingly significant in areas such as sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, discourse analysis, and social psychology. Identity is indeed an underlying assumption of all socio-linguistic studies.

To explore the dynamics of linguistic identity, it is important to discuss the general notion of identity from a socio-historical perspective. The word 'identity' has been derived from the Latin expression *identitas*, meaning 'same'. The Oxford English Dictionary's (2008) definition of identity entails two basic notions of it. On the one hand, it takes into account an absolute sameness, and on the other, it implies a lasting distinctiveness. The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2007) defines identity as the fact of being who/what a person/group/thing is, and the characteristics that make one different from others. Thus, definitions of identity include opposite paradigms—sameness and distinctiveness.

Identity theorists approach identity in different ways and work with different dimensions of self-experience. Some theorists, such as Henri Tajfel (1981), prefer to see identity as a set of self-concepts that people internalise because of their group affiliation. Melissa Butcher (2003) extends the definition of identity beyond the socio-cultural perspective by commenting that "identity is not only a social phenomenon but also a tool for the management of the self, directing correct behaviour within the context of the social, so that it can continue to function as a unit" (16). However, Zygmunt Bauman (2004), approaches identity from a different viewpoint and notes, "the very idea of 'identity' was born out of the crisis of belonging" (20). His discussion on the purpose of identity stresses that identity can be either goal-oriented or means-oriented; it can be a path towards emancipation but it can also be a form of oppression. Identity, according to P. W. Peterson (1997), has many aspects, which derive from certain sources and find expression in particular social contexts. Kwame Appiah's (2005) study emphasises that "identity is always attributed through concepts and practices made available to you by religion, society, school, and state, mediated by friends, family, and peers..." (20). Charles Taylor (1989) considers the concept of identity from three diverse perspectives. First, identity defines the moral outlook of each individual, in the sense that individuals are able to determine what is important to them from the stance of morality. Second, identity enables individuals to have a better grip on their own destiny. Third, individuals are also a part of a group or nation and they define themselves by their collective past and national identity. Looked at from this perspective, identities make more sense in multilingual, multicultural, and plural societies, both at the regional and global level, marked by a transition of identities and identity crisis, that is, the making and unmaking of groups. Identities may also be

seen as existing in a state of flux and as defined strongly by time and space. At times, there can be an overlap of identities, but usually, only a specific identity is expressed and asserted in a specific space, time, and context. Thus, identity can also be defined as the social space one occupies in different times and contexts.

Exploring the historical outlook on identity, James Bolt and Richard K. Collins (2003) consider the concern with awareness of identity as a social phenomenon of relatively recent origin. Through the 1950s and early 1960s, the term was understood primarily as referring to individuals and was thought to be more of a concern of academic psychology. However, the late 1960s and subsequent decades saw various developments in the United States and elsewhere in the world that brought group identity to the fore, along with political claims based upon those identities. From a sociological position, there has been a reallocation in the theories of identity studies. Contemporary sociology now focuses on different notions of identity, such as gender and cultural identities, whereas five decades ago, the foremost focus was on class-based identities, and classes were considered the principal determining factor of social identity. Moreover, while conventional sociology has concentrated on sameness, the more recent postmodern sociology has concentrated on differences.

## 1.2. Diversity/Multiplicity of Identities

Each individual asserts his/her multiple identities through several ways. It is a universal fact that individuals have various roles with regard to others—child, friend, spouse, parent, teacher, etc., and other categories like gender, citizen, and religion. An individual communicates with different identities, and his/her identity shifts according to the context. Saville-Troike (1989) refers to this existence of multiple categories as a person's 'repertoire of social identities' and explains that "each identity that a person takes on is associated with a number of approximate verbal and nonverbal forms of expression" (20). Identity, in terms of time, space, and context, is always in multiplicity. For instance, a resident of India can simultaneously be Indian, Punjabi, male, Hindu, a doctor, and so on.

Identities, whether group or individual, can be categorised into different types. The communication theory of identity proposed by J. R. Baldwin and Michael Hecht (1995) recognises four layers or levels of identity, which are as follows:

I. Personal identity (individual's perception of self, which captures who a person thinks s/he is)

II. Enacted identity (how an identity is expressed in language and communication)
III. Relational identity (identities in reference to one another)
IV. Communal identity (identities as defined by collectives)

However, John Joseph (2004) categorises the fundamental types of individual identities as follows:

I. One for real people and one for imagined, and for virtual
II. One for oneself and one for others
III. One for individuals and one for groups

Moreover, the notion of multiplicity of identity can further be categorised into the following types:

I. Physical identity—who an individual is for other individuals, according to their mental space and understanding
II. Geographical identity—where one is from
III. Social identity—who an individual is in the eyes of society (most varied, because individuals have different social roles)
IV. Contextual identity—where one is currently

From a linguistic perspective, the multiplicity of identity can be discussed at different levels of language operations. Identity does not emerge at a single analytical level of language (vowel quality, code choice, ideological structure), but simultaneously operates at multiple levels. Individual identity practices start with a personal name and the meaning given to that name. Personal names are always assigned according to the accepted conventions, and in keeping with the cultural, social, and linguistic norms of a community. The importance of names as carriers of identity has only recently attracted the attention of linguists. It falls under the area of 'onomastics', which is the branch of lexicology that studies the origins and history of proper names. David Crystal defines onomastics as "the science which studies names" (2:140). *Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary* describes onomastics as "the science or study of the origin and forms of proper names of persons or places". Every so often, the given name of a person or the name of the language s/he uses or the geographical location s/he belongs to fulfills the same function. Identity can be considered purely a linguistic notion, if it is just treated as name (or signifier) and reference/meaning (or signified). Individuals can engage in multiple identity practices simultaneously, and they are able to move from

one identity to another. In her discussion on the multiplicity of identity, Tabouret-Keller (1997) highlights that "identity is rather a network of identities, reflecting the many commitments, allegiances, loyalties, passions, and hatreds everyone tries to handle in ever-varying compromise strategies" (321). She says further that every member of a speech community is endowed with different layers of identities, some parts of which are loose and prone to frequent change and replacement, while others are more or less permanent throughout the lifespan and across social and cultural spaces.

Joseph (2004) considers identity as usually constructed through differences from 'others'; a categorical distancing that can sometimes lead to a desire for segregation. Although there can be multiple identities with which an individual engages, he/she is not permitted to use any identity with which he/she is not actually associated. Any such violation of identity is known as 'identity theft[1]', which is a combined term for crimes involving the illegal usage of another individual's identity.

## 1.3. Theoretical Approaches

The question of identity assertion is crucial and requires explanation from diverse approaches. Among the different approaches, two of the main ones are 'constructionism' and 'essentialism'. These raise the issue: whether identity is something that is given and predetermined or if it is a discursive process that is constructed and reconstructed. In terms of the former, identities are considered practices and deliberate constructions that are not fixed but fluid in nature, and in terms of the latter, identity is considered a category; something that is given and fixed.

The constructionists view identity as a process of something that is constructed and performed for ourselves and for others, and for individuals and for groups, and they consider identities as arbitrary divisions among people. According to S. Hall (1995), identity is seen "not as an already accomplished fact, but as a 'production' that is always in the process of formation" (222). Pierre Bourdieu (1991) supports this position and admits that "identities are not real, but once established; they exist as mental representations and seem as real as if they are grounded in anything 'natural'..." (221). Similarly, E. H. Erikson (1968) perceives identity formation as an interactive process that takes place throughout life. However, Anthony Giddens (1991) suggests that debates about essentialism and anti-essentialism are something of a distraction, and he holds the view that the meaning is also part of identity. Joseph's approach

does not consider identities, whether group or individual, as natural facts about people but as the notions, they construct for different purposes.

The essentialists consider linguistic identity as a given and fixed aspect of who an individual or group is. Joseph's account shows that in the essentialist approach, categories such as nationality, class, race, gender, etc., are taken as a given, in terms of which people's linguistic behaviour can be analysed. He further proposes that how people perceive the world can be observed through language.

Looked at from the constructionist perspective, identities are embedded in pragmatic narratives and articulated, communicated, and constructed, overtly or covertly, consciously or unconsciously, in every single communicative act. In a multilingual individual with different choices of codes at his/her disposal, choosing a specific code to signal the same message with different individuals/groups in different contexts is indeed a statement of articulation and assertion of identity. Speakers also use language to indicate their social allegiances, that is, which groups they are and are not members. Speakers construct their identity through a careful choice of the appropriate linguistic features that will convey the specific social information that identifies them as part of a particular speech community.

Barker and Galasinski (2001) conclude that identities as descriptions in language are achieved in the everyday flow of language and are stabilised as categories through their embedding in the pragmatic narratives of day-to-day social conduct. Thus, the claim that language is constitutive of identity is not simply an abstract and philosophical one but an argument located in the everyday social conversations of ordinary life. In the daily life of speaking subjects, the construction of identity, according to S. Widdicombe and R. Wooffitt (1995), is "...a fluid accomplishment, instantiated in the procedural flow of verbal interaction..." (218). Here, identity is achieved as a verbal construction, mobilised for particular purposes in the context of social conversations. Language in particular, as pointed out by John Shotter (1993), is formative of identity in the context of constructing and maintaining social relationships. Valetin Voloshinov (1973) strongly favours the constructionist approach and highlights that the speaker is neither a given nor a constant but constructed in interaction with interlocutors and is ultimately inseparable from them.

The variationist sociolinguistics consider identity as a pre-discursive construct that correlates with or even causes specific linguistic behaviours. From the standpoint of critical discourse analysis (CDA), Norman Fairclough (2003) describes a dialectical relationship between 'discourse/representation' and 'style/identification', by which discourse is

'inculcated' in identities in a more agentive and on-going process of identification (159-60). However, identity in CDA, whilst realised at the micro-discursive level, tends to be treated as an index or expression of an ideological position; a discursive construction rooted in historical, political, and ideological views of communication. The constructionist paradigm of identity is central to gender-oriented research. Mary Bucholtz's (2003) work on gendered language clearly shows how contemporary feminists view identities as fluid not frozen. For them, although identities link individuals to particular social groups, such links are not predetermined. Instead, identities emerge in practice through the combined forces of structure and agency. The ultimate aim of identity formation could probably be accommodated in Bourdieu's (1991) stand that "struggles over classifications are just in order to legitimise the divisions of the social world and to make and unmake groups" (221).

Thus, identity may be conceived as a social and subjective construct. As a subjective construct, it can be categorised into negative and positive constructions. Bucholtz's (2003) study describes negative identity practices as those "that individuals employ to distance themselves from a rejected identity" (147). Contrary to that, positive identity practices are "those in which individuals engage themselves actively to construct a chosen identity" (147). In other words, through such practices, individuals or groups want to show who/what they are and are not and what they do and do not want to be.

Scholars working on linguistic identity studies have not always been placed in a position of theory construction. Nevertheless, there are a few theories regarding the linguistic aspects of identity. One of the significant theories concerning language and identity is the 'Communication Accommodation Theory', postulated by Howard Giles in the year 1979. This theory was first named as the 'Speech Accommodation Theory'. However, in addition to speech, it accommodates numerous characteristics and nuances of communication; hence, it was renamed. According to Giles (1982), a basic postulate of the theory is that:

> ". . . people are motivated to adjust their speech style as means of expressing values, attitudes, and intentions towards others. It is proposed that the extent to which individuals shift their speech styles towards or away from the speech styles of their interlocutors is a mechanism by which social approval or disapproval is communicated. A shift in speech style towards that of another is termed as *convergence* and is often considered as a reflection of social interaction, whereas, a shift away from other's style of speech represents *divergence* and is considered often a tactic of social dissociation." (105)

Joseph further explains that the 'Communication Accommodation Theory' and narrates that it is not bound to assume that all individuals have one linguistic identity and that it is somehow essentially bound to who they really are. In fact, what people accommodate is not another person but the identity they have constructed for that person. The act of their accommodating becomes a feature of their own linguistic identity. Speech accommodation can thus be seen in either its divergent or convergent framework. Ultimately, the purpose is identity adjustment to increase group status and favourability. As rightly illustrated by Michael Burgoon (1995), "Convergence reflects a desire for approval, and occurs when perceived benefits outweigh costs. Divergence, or at least speech maintenance, reflects a desire for personal dissociation or an emphasis upon positive in-group identity" (76). In other words, the Communication Accommodation Theory offers that in any kind of speech act, individuals accommodate themselves and others by communicating according to the context, ultimately showing convergence or divergence from other individuals and groups.

In the year 1984, Allen Bell postulated one more theory concerning linguistic identity. Bell called his theory the 'Audience-Design Model of Style Shifting (161), and propounded that style is a matter of 'audience design'. He further stressed that "speakers design their style for their audience" (197). Bell's model offers further explanations about how speakers adjust their speech primarily towards that of their audience in order to express solidarity or intimacy with them, or conversely, away from their audience's speech in order to express distance. However, this model was criticised by some linguists who argued that speakers project their own identity and do not just respond to how others view them. Nevertheless, many other linguists, including Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, offer their support for Bell's model. For instance, in this context, Le page stresses that a speaker creates his linguistic system and speech acts as 'acts of projection'. He views each speech act as a projection of the speaker's identity. Speakers bring into play the variable linguistic resources available to them in a community as a means of identifying with certain groups, subject to certain constraints. However, Le Page's study provides scope to understand and interpret the multidimensionality of identities signalled in a single utterance. Communication Accommodation Theory and Audience Design both approach linguistic identity from the constructionist and attitudinal perspectives by stressing the role of the individual in constructing, accommodating, or designing his/her identity for others (individuals or groups).

One of the serious efforts to propose a theoretical framework of language identity research is the work of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller in their 1985 version of '*Acts of Identity: Creole-based approaches to language and ethnicity*'. Liliane M.Vassberg (1993), while commenting on this study, concludes that Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's hypothesis of 'acts of identity' provides a theoretical framework to assess the processes of emergence and disintegration of identities and of the resulting language shift or language maintenance. Their study further emphasises that "the individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behaviour, so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which, from time to time, he/she wishes to be identified, or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be dissociated" (181). Brown and Gilman's (1960) account on language and group solidarity illustrates that "when a speaker violates a linguistic norm of a group, its usual interpretation is that the speaker is not one of [us] but of [them] or [others]" (276). Similarly, Tabouret-Keller's (1997) description of the proximity of language and group identity highlights that the link between language and identity is often so strong that a single feature of language use is enough to identify someone's membership to a given group. A single utterance can exhibit much about a speaker, his/her background, place of birth or nation of origin, social class, or even social intention, that is, whether s/he wants to appear friendly or distant, familiar or deferential, superior or inferior.

Among the other (non-linguistic) identity theories, the sociolinguists attempted to integrate the Social Identity Theory of Henri Tejfal (1978) and attempted to accommodate it towards an identity-based analysis of utterances in multilingual and multidialectal communities. Specifically, Dell Hymes and John Gumperz tried to accommodate the theory in their (1982) work '*Language and Social Identity*'. However, Joseph contends that this work could not provide a proper referential framework for the Social Identity theory.

## 1.4. Language-Identity Linkage: Socialisation, Culture, and Nationalism

The relationship between language, identity, culture, and nation is an intriguing one. The value ascribed to speech, as presumed by Bourdieu (1977), cannot be understood in isolation from the person who speaks, and the person who speaks cannot be understood in isolation from larger networks of social relationships—many of which may be unequally structured. His position is that linguists take for granted the conditions for the establishment of communication—that those who speak regard those

who listen as worthy of listening, and that those who listen regard those who speak as worthy of speaking. Bourdieu persuasively asserts that an expanded definition of competence should include the 'right to speak' or 'the power to impose reception' (75).

One of the important concerns of linguistic identity studies is the association of the first language (L1) with identity. There have been various arguments in favour of the view that the first language is the means to understanding the world and representing it in people's minds. Joseph confers that the strong version of the L1 identity approach is that one's perception of the world is determined by the structure of one's native language, and the weak version is that the structure of a language partly determines a native speaker's categorisation of experiences. Addressing the nature of the relationship between the first language and identity, Vuolab (2000) affirms that "the mother tongue is a chain that binds us to our own history; by passing on our language, the mother tongue, to the next generation, we ourselves guarantee that life itself will continue into the future" (13). In other words, the first language plays a significant role in conceptualising the world, and more importantly, as a vehicle for identity formation. The structures of the L1, specifically phonology, play a significant role in the process of transference. For example, in multilingual societies like India, it is easy to recognise a Bengali speaker even if s/he speaks Hindi because of transference, wherein some aspects of Bengali dominate their Hindi at the lexical, phonological, and syntactic levels.

M. Craft (1982) proposes that the loss of mother tongue weakens a culture and may lead to intergenerational stresses and loss of identity. Joseph's discussion on the nature of the relationship between the mother tongue and the speaker proposes that the mother tongue is central to the construction of the speaker's linguistic identity. The mother tongue is itself an assertion of national, ethnic, or religious identity (or any combination of the three) that speakers may make and that listeners will certainly interpret. Some languages may be used for reification and for communicative or symbolic functions only, and not as representational and thinking processes. Emphasising the importance of the mother tongue (L1) in identity construction, Joseph claims, "We all have many layers of linguistic identity, and it is also the case that the second language can play a significant role in one's linguistic identity. Still, the mother tongue has a very special role, bound as it is with representation, which is to say, with the way we think, imagine and dream" (185). Thus, it can be inferred that the act of knowing who one is belongs not to the realm of communication but to representation. It asks, what is the language in which one thinks,

dreams, imagines, and interprets? Nevertheless, some linguists argue that languages have a deep connection to the thought and culture of the people who speak them and that every language divides the world differently. Keeping in mind the significance of the first language in understanding the world, individuals and groups are always motivated to transmit it to the next generation, because strong sociolinguistic evidence suggests that if a code is not passed onto future generations, its continuation is endangered.

Focusing on the importance of linguistic identities, Kwame Appiah (2005) proposes that the very material out of which people's identities are shaped is provided partly by their language in a 'broad sense', comprising not only the words they speak but also other modes of expression, including the 'languages' of art, gesture, and love (20). It may be concluded that identity, whether religious, state, cultural, or linguistic, has always been used as a means of classification in the construction of hierarchy; hence, one of the important dimensions of identification is social stratification, and thereby the making and unmaking of groups.

Language is a great force of socialisation. It symbolises social solidarity with those who speak it. A number of sociologists have emphasised the central role of language in creating social identities. Because language is inherently involved in socialisation, the social group whose language people speak is an important identity group for them. Linguistic behaviour, according to Ralph Fasold (1987), is a major factor in the definition of social boundaries. Language reflects, expresses, and concretises social entities as contrastive self-identifications. Frederick Newmeyer (1986) says that "language is the most characteristic medium of social exchange; thus, it must reflect and influence all facets of our social existence" (5).

Eventually, identity can be said to be an outcome of socialisation, such that differences in speech communities is because of differences in socialisation, where individuals not only learn communication but also the 'ethnography of communication' and the negotiation of identities in varying contexts with different individuals and groups. Identity negotiation is a process in which a person negotiates the meaning of his or her identity with society. It arises from learning social roles through personal experience. A person not only learns how and what to speak but also how to assert and communicate identity, overtly or covertly, according to varying social roles and contexts. In this framework, Bernstein (1970) stresses that it is socialisation that teaches individuals how to maintain identity within a group. Similarly, Bauman (2004) views identity as an outcome of socialisation—it does not incubate in human experience naturally and does not emerge as a self-evident fact of life;

rather, it is conceptualised through the process of socialisation. Language is the only medium through which individuals and groups conceptualise the 'grammar of culture'. For example, a child learns to be male, female, an English speaker, Muslim, Christian, and alienate himself/herself from the roles that he/she is not supposed to perform within a certain culture and context. During the complex process of socialisation, a child not only learns the lexicon but also the communicative competence and articulation of identities. Thus, acquiring a language not only includes learning lexical items but also involves learning one's identity in varying social environments.

Language is indeed a part of all social, cultural, and religious practices. Nonetheless, as Voloshinov (1973) opines, language is not culturally neutral; it cannot be, not even at the level of individual linguistic sign. Individuals use language to signal or create their cultural identity, making language culturally loaded. Voloshinov further remarks that whenever a sign is present, ideology is present too. Thus, it can be asserted that the sign-signifier relationship is not arbitrary or as simple as presented by Ferdinand de Saussure. The language-identity linkage attempts to question the arbitrary nature of the relationship between the signifier and the signified. Thus, according to Saussure, identity lies in parole and not in langue, because langue has no individual manifestation, emerging only as a stable abstraction. Hence, linguistic identity is asserted via parole, and thus, the relationship between sign and signifier cannot be assumed as arbitrary and neutral, for it is much more complex, ideologically motivated, and constructed. Although languages are related to other institutions and social discourse, the notion of arbitrariness between sign and signifier isolates a language from such discourse, including identity.

The relationship of a language with other important forms of social discourse, including education, culture, politics, religion, economy, and gender, makes its association with identity more significant and sometimes complex. To the researcher, the traditional association of language with identity was threefold, with culture at its center.

***Language ↔ Culture ↔ Identity***

Language is the only means of conceptualising and transmitting culture and its associated identities, and it matters not only in articulating identity but also in understanding it. Whorfian's framework (1956) suggests that every language divides the world differently and that language is essential for the formation and transmission of culture. Language, in the semiotic

sense, permits the interaction and proliferation of ideas that are essential for social cohesion and cultural identity.

In other words, the entire phenomenon of identity can be understood as a linguistic one. Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) discussion on language and identity practices highlights the position that identities encompass macro-level demographic categories, temporary and interactionally specific stances and participant roles, and local and ethnographically emergent cultural positions. For them, identities may be linguistically indexed through labels, implicatures, stances, styles, or linguistic structures and system. People share a common 'linguistic culture' with members of the group who speak the same language, which constitutes a speech community.

From the semiotic perspective, identity is a product and not the source of linguistic and other semiotic practices, and is thus social and cultural rather than an internal psychological phenomenon.

The historical link of language with identity and with nation, according to John Edwards (1985), is largely a product of the German Romanticism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Emphasising the nature of the relationship between language and national identity, he avers that nations are really language groups and thus nationalism is a linguistic movement. His discussion further offers an explanation to how Germans considered "themselves and their nation superior to others because of the power of the German language, which they think was superior to other languages" (25-26), such as French and Latin. It is being contended that language is associated with the 'soul' or the 'spirit' of the particular nationality.

Furthermore, at the national level, language acts as a symbol of unification; for example, in the United States, it is thought to be 'un-American' to speak a language other than English and at the local level, language is a symbol of loyalty to a community. John Firth (1957) holds the same view about the relationship between language and nationalism, though from a semantic perspective. He remarks, "Surely it is part of the meaning of 'an American' to sound like one" (195). Joseph further analyses the argument and acknowledges that identifying someone as American implies certain expectations and agreements about the form of English they speak, thus 'an American' has a meaning, which is clearly about language and national identity. Furthermore, Bonnie Urciuoli (1998) concludes that when languages other than English are spoken in public contexts in the United States, the speakers are viewed as a threat to the essence of being American. Elie Kedouri (1993), in his description of the role of identities and nationalism, remarks that "originally, the [linguistic]

doctrine emphasised language as the test of nationality, because language was seen as an outward sign of a group's peculiar identity and a significant means of ensuring its continuity" (68-69). Language per se has been understood to be an important constituent of cultural, socio-economic, religious, and national identity projects.

## 1.5. Language-Identity Research: Approaches

A lot of research gives central importance to the language-identity relationship. In fact, linguistic identity is an underlying assumption in all sociolinguistic studies. All sorts of sociolinguistic studies— including those on language attitude, stratification, national language development, language policy and planning, language and gender, and language conflict—articulate linguistic-identity statements overtly or covertly. Language policy and planning studies have shown how standardisation and marginalisation are equated with power relations across social groups. Similarly, gender studies have explained how the construction of a gendered identity is articulated through linguistic marking.

Language attitude research has shown that individuals form a strong conception of each other's identities based on the way they speak. Some factors, mostly utilitarian and instrumental, play a significant role in shaping and reshaping attitudes towards a language or its speakers. For example, Bourdeiu (1991) considers society a 'linguistic market place' (55) in which languages are valued positively or negatively. Similarly, Nancy Dorian (1982) holds the view that language loyalty persists as long as economic and social circumstances are conducive to it, but if some other language proves to be of greater value, a shift to that language begins. John Edward proposes that the relationship between language and economics is a very strong one; specific considerations underlie most linguistic patterns and alterations, which is the opposite of what nationalists think. In short, there is clear historical evidence that economic (utilitarian) motives usually determine language use.

Language shift is mainly dependent on a community's perception of their future. Support for a given language becomes problematic when it cannot cope with new challenges and social mobility. Similarly, some group identities—, which are not perceived as interfering with social mobility and advancement—are retained. However, language, as a marker, is perceived to be responsible for upward social mobility. To put it simply, a decline in the existence and attraction of traditional lifestyles also inevitably entails a decline in the languages associated with them.

The study of language attitudes also reveals with some regularity that different varieties evoke different perceptions; that is, speakers' identities are evaluated largely in terms of status and solidarity. Linguistic accommodation research has demonstrated how an individual's speech is conditioned by the people to whom he/she speaks.

Languages can be and are used to express and create respect by speaking in a superior manner or by interpreting others' way of speaking as inferior. Such feelings, according to Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998), are the basis of the 'linguistic inferiority principle'. According to this principle, "the speech of a socially subordinate group will be interpreted as inadequate in comparison to that of a socially dominant group" (6). Thus, it can be concluded that within a speech community and culture, speech patterns become tools that speakers manipulate to group themselves and categorise others. It has been observed that stereotypical notions and negative connotations attached with certain varieties can be a basis for the negative perception of the whole group, community, race, or people belonging to a certain geolinguistic zone. According to Saville-Troike (1989), this form of stereotyping is common, because language's correlation with extra-linguistic categories in a society is 'highly visible' (94).

James Gee (1996) provides a clear account of how language variation figures in the process of identity construction. He starts with the familiar example that different socioeconomic classes vary in the extent to which they use standard or colloquial forms of pronunciation. For example, the contrast in English between '–ing' and '–in' suffixes in verbs such as talking/talkin, singing/singin, or sleeping/sleepin. All social classes use the formal (-ing) and informal (-in) variants, but they differ in how frequently they do so. He further explains that the selection of one or the other is used to signal status and solidarity. The use of a standard variant like '–ing' reflects higher status than the colloquial '–in'; that is, '–ing' marks hierarchy. Conversely, a colloquial '–in' reflects low status but strong 'solidarity'. It is used when speakers wish to show inclusion, solidarity, or belonging. Stratification studies clearly reveal how social group distinctions and language variations correlate and how social stratification is articulated via linguistic stratification by adopting standard forms. In other words, social stratification is reflected in linguistic stratification, which, in turn, consolidates it, as observed in Labov's (1966) study of the social stratification of English in New York City.

Communities and social groups with high socio-economic, cultural, and social prestige are granted linguistic prestige, and those with low socio-economic, cultural, and social prestige are looked down upon

linguistically as well. Based on the above discussion, it can be summarised that on the one hand, the link between language and identity is very intricate but that on the other hand, it is very complex to conceptualise. To sum up, literary movements, modernisation processes, religious movements, democratisation, state formation processes, and cultural autonomy movements have all used language as a special tool and marker of identity to achieve certain goals.

For Gumperz (1982), the study of language as a form of interactional discourse demonstrates that parameters such as gender, ethnicity, religion, and class are not constants that can be taken for granted; rather, they are communicatively produced. Individual and social identities are mediated by language. Speakers also use language to indicate social allegiance; that is, to denote which groups they are and are not members of, and to express the relationship between individuals. At the individual level, meaning lies not only in 'what is said' but also in 'who is saying' it; that is, it indicates the identity of the individual. At this level, in many languages, metalinguistic structures such as pronouns (like 'you') can also act as linguistic indicators of social identity and can construct intimacy, solidarity, or distance. For example, in Hindi, the use of *aap* /a:p/ (a formal expression) for 'you' shows respect, while the use of *tu* /tu:/ (an informal expression) for 'you' expresses intimacy and love. The former is used for elders and superiors or in formal situations, and the latter is used in informal and close relationships. Language, for Lippi-Green (1997), expresses the way individuals situate themselves in relation to others, the way they group themselves, and the powers they claim for themselves.

The relationship between group identity and language is always interesting, complex, and often powerful. Language is highly important—an essential component of group identity. Highlighting the relationship between linguistic identity and group solidarity, Edward Sapir (1949) states that speaking a language not only reflects identity but also shows social solidarity with those who speak it. Each speaker in a community has several groups with which s/he might want to identify. The relationship between language use and group membership operates at different levels. At a higher group level, community identity is also articulated through language. Different group markers like religion, caste, and ethnicity have been used to define the very notion of 'community'. Sociolinguists have also defined community by employing language as the fundamental tool and have thus labelled such a language-based community as a 'speech community'. Although scholars have defined the notion of a speech community from diverse perspectives, all of them recognise language as an essential component of community formation. For example, John

Gumperz (1971) defines a speech community as "any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs, and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage" (114). Ana Zentella (1997) further clarifies this definition and states that "the shared body of verbal signs has been interpreted as a set of rules for one or more linguistic codes and for the ways of speaking that develop as a consequence of regular participation in overlapping networks" (179). The phrase 'human aggregate' in Gumperz's view can be interpreted as any group of people that shares some common attribute, such as language, region, race, ethnicity, caste, age, occupation, religion, and gender.

However, Polly Streling (2000) holds the view that speakers construct their identities through a careful choice of appropriate linguistic features that will convey the specific social information that identifies them as part of a particular speech community. Expressing membership in a community is a careful and conscious effort. For instance, in order to appear English, Mexican-Americans in the United States, who occupy places in two cultures and two linguistic groups (Spanish and English); often deny their Mexican heritage. Sterling further states that just as an individual has a range of social identities, a speech community as a whole has a range of roles and identities for all the different subgroups within it. The range of linguistic varieties used to express these roles is known as a 'community's communicative repertoire'. This repertoire can include different languages, different regional or social dialects, different registers, and/or different channels of communication (oral, written, manual).

## 1.6. Interlingual Diglossia: Language Shift and Identity Negotiations

Diglossia is the functional distribution of varieties of the same language into high (H) and low (L). Bell (1984) defines diglossia as "a linguistic situation where the stratification of variation shows sensitivity to the situational context rather than to social class" (153). After Ferguson's (1959) original formulation of diglossia, the research on diglossia has extended to different contexts and multilingual situations where the H and L varieties are two structurally different languages rather than different codes of the same language.

Several scholars have proposed different terminologies for the classification of diglossia, from Ferguson's (1959) 'classical diglossia' to Fishman's (1967) 'extended diglossia'. Kloss (1966) has proposed the terms 'in-diglossia' (when the two varieties are closely related) and 'out-

diglossia' (when the two languages are unrelated, or at best, distantly related) (138). The other terms used for when the codes are varieties of the same language and of different languages, respectively, are intra-lingual diglossia and inter-lingual diglossia. Some scholars prefer to use 'endo-diglossia' and 'exo-diglossia', arguing that these prefixes fit better with the original Greek root of the term 'diglossia'. In the case of 'exo' or 'interlingual diglossia', which is considered a form of extended diglossia, the codes are varieties of different languages. However, Fishman (1967) notes that the degree of structural proximity between codes is irrelevant to the definition of diglossia. He also explains that diglossia not only exists in multilingual societies that officially recognise several languages but also in societies that are multilingual in that they employ separate dialects, registers, or functionally differentiated language varieties (30). Tannen (1982) supports a related hypothesis of diglossia and asserts that the distinction between written and spoken languages in literate traditions has been viewed as resembling the distinction between high and low varieties in diglossia. There are several non-linguistic factors such as socio-historical, religious, political, and economic ones, which lead to 'interlingual' diglossia. The language of literacy in a community has the potential to be the prestigious variety, because the negative connotations and stigmatisation of 'illiteracy' are part of a wider ideological discourse that devalues vernacular literacy and non-standard varieties of oral practices. Coulmas's (1987) framework explicates that "writing introduces the possibility of a permanent rift between characteristically different language varieties into every speech community, thereby leading to potential diglossia in every speech community that becomes literate" (122). Writing is an outcome of literacy, and the written variety dominates the spoken vernaculars. Ferguson (1968) states, "communities, as they begin the regular use of writing, generally do not feel that ordinary, everyday speech is appropriate for written use" (29-30). The choice of language for writing purposes may involve a host of religious, political, and social factors; hence, it is not determined simply by orthography. Similarly, Koul (2005) also acknowledges the power associated with written language and proposes that "the writing system is not only a mode of communication through the visual medium but also has social value attached to it" (65). In most communities, the high status and positive connotations associated with the written language—and with literacy—attract people to use it for spoken purposes too.

In this way, it can be surmised that the written script and literacy often play an important role in changing the significance/roles (oral practices) of different languages from indigenous varieties to other standard varieties.

Because one of the most common elements in a layman's outlook on language, is the view that the written language is the proper language, while the spoken vernacular varieties are crude, primitive, incorrect, and unsuited for higher functions. Thus, language in a literate society—or rather, in a society with varying degrees of literacy—becomes a potent means of social stratification. The written language makes the spoken language a 'restricted code' and renders it insufficient as a basis for societal and career advancement. Hence, it can be concluded that in any speech community that shows a clear-cut functional distribution between written and spoken varieties, there is a possibility that the written language will dominate and take over communicative functions as well, because of the prestige and positive connotations attached to it. This condition can lead to a complete language shift and in extreme cases, language loss, and subsequent, identity transition/shift and loss.

## 1.7. Legalising Linguistic Identities: Linguistic Human Rights

The discussion above clearly explains the role of language-based identity matters in the continuation of war and peace. Keeping the significance of linguistic identities in mind, linguistic freedom is considered a fundamental right of all individuals, groups, and speech communities. Any kind of linguistic imposition, 'linguicide', or 'linguistic genocide' is considered a violation of linguistic human rights. Linguicide, according to Hassanpour (2000), is "a deliberate killing of language" (33). Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) strongly warns that if people are not allowed to identify with their mother tongue and ethnic group and to learn and develop their mother tongue in school and use it publicly, the consequence of this in the long run is that the language will be killed, which is called 'linguicide'. Different mechanisms and ideologies are used as weapons for linguicide, such as the imposition or prohibition of a language by institutional or state authorities. For example, until Ireland gained independence from the United Kingdom, using the Irish language in any education-related context was forbidden.

The assertion of linguistic-identity statements can lead to confrontations between individuals, groups, or communities. The history of linguistic conflicts, particularly in multilingual and multicultural nations, has showed how strong language identity statements are and how they can be a basis for intense conflict between diverse linguistic groups. In extreme cases, it can lead to division, separatism, and the formation of new groups and nations. For example, the language-based conflicts in multilingual

societies like India, or the separation and formation of Bangladesh, are partly based on linguistic conflict. Similarly, Lippi-Green explains how language played a role in the war of 1812, which began partly because the United States was upset with the British procedures for drafting American citizens into the British Navy. The British argued that the criteria for selection include 'speaking like an Englishman' (31); thus, if one were not English, one would not speak as an Englishman does, and hence, would not be selected. At the time, the United States was largely colonised by the British; hence, many U. S. citizens would have spoken like Englishmen. However, speaking like an Englishman (rather than citizenship) was professedly the main criterion for the British selectors.

In order to prevent the loss and demise of languages through obstructive policies of the state or its institutions, several language emancipation policies and laws of human rights were formulated. Anna Meijknecht (2001) reveals that after the end of the Cold War, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a declaration on the rights of persons belonging to different minorities, including linguistic minorities. The international human rights law plays an important role in setting up standards for linguistic rights, and especially, in the protection and promotion of the identity of linguistic minority groups. Article 1.1 of the United Nations' declaration regarding minorities says that the state shall protect the existence of minorities and their national or ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic identities within their respective territories, and it shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity. It provides a democratic environment for the growth and development of linguistic pluralism and cultural diversity and avoids ethno-linguistic conflicts. At the national level, linguistic rights are implemented in national constitutions at the most fundamental level. Different nations have special laws to safeguard language rights or linguistic human rights. Article 29 of the Indian Constitution says that any section of Indian citizens or any part thereof with a distinct language, script, or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same. Thus, it clearly shows how strong and sensitive the language-identity linkage is and how it can contribute to peace and war among groups, communities, and nations.

The above discussion explains the centrality of language to identity. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that had language manifested only as a means of communication, such conflicts may not have appeared, and there may not have been any language conflicts, linguicide, or the need for a declaration of linguistic human rights or for language rights movements.

## 1.8. Language Planning Versus Identity Planning

A few years ago, both the terms in the title would have been considered novel. Neither language nor identity was commonly thought of as an object of planning. The attempts of governments to manipulate these phenomena would have seemed too unsystematic, natural, or nefarious to merit the word 'planning'. Today, only one of these terms is unusual: identity planning. Language has become widely subjected to deliberate, systematic policy making, and one eminent sociolinguist, Haugen (1966), has argued that there is "a mushrooming of language planning in our times." Beyond this, the regulation of language, practiced from time immemorial, has become recognised as an important activity. 'Language planning' is now considered by some scholars and policy-makers as their field of specialisation, and there is an increasing volume of publications specifically in this field. If language planning has grown so common and has come under such notice, identity planning must be considered as well, because language and identity are interrelated. Many scholars believe that identity influences language, and many believe that language influences identity. If these beliefs are true, then the following conclusions make sense:

- Since language affects identity, an increase in language planning means that planners are having an increasing effect on identity. In other words, identity planning (whether deliberate or not) is increasing.
- Since good planning takes into account possibly adverse or dysfunctional effects, language planners should study the effects of planned linguistic change on identity.
- Since identity affects language, language planners should consider identity planning as a means of accomplishing their goals.
- Since language affects identity, those wanting to influence identity should consider language planning as a means to do so.

Those who wish to foil the efforts of language planners should consider using identity, and those who wish to foil the efforts of identity planners should consider using language to accomplish their aim.

All these conclusions call for the knowledge of how language and identity interact, and particularly, how changes in language and identity interact. In addition, it is important to know what aspects or types of language and what aspects or types of identity are related.

## 1.9. Linguistic Identities in Cyberspace

If language is becoming an increasingly important identity marker in the age of information, what is its role in cyberspace? Interestingly, the internet highlights the role of language, while simultaneously masking the role of other identity markers, such as race, gender, or class. As the saying goes, nobody on the internet knows who you are, nor can they easily determine if you are black or white, male or female, rich or poor. However, they can immediately ascertain which language and dialect you are using.

Moreover, it is a concern of many people that the language used on the internet is usually English. As of 1996, according to Graddol (1997), about 82% of the world's webpages were in English (cyberspeech), and most of the early nationally-oriented internet newsgroups conducted their discussion in English as well. This state of affairs caused great consternation for many people around the world, whose concerns were well expressed by Anatoly Voronov, the director of the Russian internet service provider, Glasnet: "It is just incredible when I hear people talking about how open the web is. It is the ultimate act of intellectual colonialism. The product comes from America, so we must either adapt to English or stop using it. That is the right of any business. But if you are talking about a technology that is supposed to open the world to hundreds of millions of people, you are joking" (qtd. in Warschauer, 2000).

The early dominance of English on the internet was due to several factors. First, a high percentage of the early users were North Americans. Second, the American computer scientists who designed personal computers and the internet did it on the basis of the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII), which made computing in other alphabets or character sets inconvenient or impossible. Finally, at a more basic level, by bringing together users across many countries, the internet has furthered the need for people to communicate in an international lingua franca and has strengthened the position of English (The Coming Global Tongue) in that role.

Nonetheless, as it turns out, the fear that the internet would be essentially in English was premature. A recent analysis by Graddol indicates that the number of non-English websites is growing rapidly and that many of the more newly active internet newsgroups extensively use their respective national languages. Indeed, according to one account, the proportion of English in computer-based communication is expected to fall from its high of 80% to approximately 40% within the next decade (Graddol). Underlying this change of direction is a more general shift from

*globalisation* to *re-localisation*. The first wave of globalisation—whether in economics or in media—witnessed vertical control from international centers, as witnessed, for example, in the rise of media giants such as Cable News Network and MTV. Nevertheless, in the recent times, a process of relocalisation is occurring, as corporations seek to maximize their market share by shaping their products for local conditions. Thus, while CNN and MTV first broadcast around the world in English, they now produce editions in Hindi, Spanish, and other languages in order to compete with other international as well as regional media outlets.

An important feature of the internet—multi-channel capacity—furthers this process. Producing a bilingual television show or newspaper raises costs dramatically; however, producing a website in two or more languages is relatively simple and inexpensive. This allows the web to support English as an international lingua franca while simultaneously facilitating the use of other languages, including those spoken only by a relatively small number of people.

People have a natural wish to use their own mother tongue and to see it survive and grow, and they do not take kindly to the language of another culture being imposed on them.

## 1.10. Language Attrition and Identity

The notion of attrition has been defined by different scholars from diverse perspectives in fields such as Linguistics, Psycholinguistics, Neurolinguistics, and Sociolinguistics. Depending on their perspective, researchers study various populations for patterns of language loss, including aphasia, dementia, and ageing. They also examine bilingual and multilingual speakers. Attrition was primarily studied from a pathological perspective, in people with aphasia, but the term was later extended to include non-pathological cases of language loss. According to Altenberg and Vago (2004), primary language attrition refers to the loss of language abilities of non-disordered individuals in an L2 environment. Language attrition has been used in the study of language loss in the context of bilingualism. Interestingly, the study of language attrition has always been the study of deviance. The underlying and unquestioned assumption in practically any given study, according to Köpke and Schmid (2002), is that to measure mistakes in the language in attrition—mistakes of production, grammatical judgments, naming, etc—is to measure the degree of an individual speaker's level of attrition (28). However, Lambert and Freed's (1982) account defines attrition as follows:

> . . . language attrition may refer to the loss of any language or any portion of a language by an individual or a speech community. It may refer to the declining use of mother tongue skills by those in bilingual situations or among ethnic minorities in (some) language contact situations, where one language, for political or social reasons, comes to replace another. (1)

Nonetheless, Kutlay Yağmur (2002) holds the view that language attrition is not an isolated phenomenon; rather, it is a special case of variation in the acquisition/use of language(s) and can best be studied, described, documented, and explained within a larger framework that includes other phenomena of L1/L2 acquisition, bilingualism, language use/choice, code-switching, code-mixing, and language attitudes. Often, language attrition is considered synonymous with language loss. Adopting the term 'language loss', Anderson (1982) summarises, "Language loss can be defined as a form of individual language evolution through which an individual loses (part of) his competence or proficiency in a particular language" (84). However, according to Jaspaert, et al. (1986), the main aspect of language loss is not the forgetting or losing of some elements/rules of a language by an individual but rather the incomplete transfer of a language from one generation to the next. Language loss, according to Lambert (1982), may simply be described as "a negative change in the level of language skills over time. The process of language loss is traced by following a group of individuals who forget part of a language due to the non-use of or minimal contact with that language" (6). Nevertheless, it is significant to note that the individual speaker is taken as a central unit of analysis.

Yet, it is still unresolved whether, within the psycholinguistic perspective, the first language (L1) can be truly lost or erased from memory or if it only becomes more inaccessible. For Cohen (1986), just as learning a word involves learning a number of characteristics of the word, forgetting a word similarly entails a temporary or permanent loss of knowledge about one or more of the word's characteristics. However, Köpke and Schmid's (2002) account illustrates that "there is no true forgetting (in the sense of disappearance of knowledge)—things (and language) only become inaccessible once they are no longer needed" (21). Language loss is not a reduction of the grammatical system of a language; rather, it appears to be a process of the gradual replacement of one or more levels of the abstract lexical structure of the L1 with the abstract lexical structure of the L2; a description also recognised by Schmitt (2002). Schmid and Köpke (2004) state that findings from individual studies seem to indicate that "it cannot be said with any certainty whether a first language in which a certain level of proficiency has been reached can ever

undergo significant attrition, let alone how or why it might do so" (1). In other words, it is difficult to find any clear-cut justification for the arguments concerning the nature of language loss.

The current sociolinguistic models of attrition were found difficult to understand without considering the psychological aspects of such models. In particular, it seemed important to know whether a given individual had lost or was able to lose the kinds of underlying mental representations of her/his first language that may be referred as L1 competence—competence in the sense of both grammatical knowledge and pragmatic competence. The question remains as to whether the change was in the subject's L1 knowledge or in the subject's control of that knowledge. However, Seliger (1985) contends that attrition is "erosion in the linguistic performance of a first or primary language" (4). The discussion of Smith and Buren (1991) clearly reveals that if a subject's L1 institutions are intact, then tests designed to probe L1 knowledge will indicate that the deviance was due to performance. Nevertheless, Seliger (1996) holds the view that "attrition in competence can express itself as the ability to recall a meaning shared by both the L1 and the L2 but to be able to retrieve only the L2 lexical item" (606). According to Ammerlaan (1996), at the level of performance, attrition results in difficulties in controlling knowledge, which results in two types of phenomena: lexical retrieval (or word finding problems) and processing difficulties. In other words, a subject is no longer as fluent in L1 as would be expected of a native speaker. Smith and Buren (1991) further propose a working hypothesis that in normal situations—that is, where there has been no physical damage to the brain—it is impossible to lose L1 competence. To differentiate competence from performance, Smith (1983) assumes three distinct stages of attrition:

I. The first stage is characterised by systemic deviations in performance while competence remains stable.
II. The second stage is described as a transitional period, where the bilingual individual is in possession of a new (contact) variety but is able to switch back to standard versions of the language when circumstances require it.
III. The third stage is characterised by the emergence of a new competence.

Nevertheless, the question remains: is it possible that an L1 cannot be erased from memory and that it only becomes increasingly inaccessible? If it could be demonstrated that in certain cases, an L1 seems to be erased from memory but is actually only inaccessible to the speaker, this would

constitute a case of the third type of attrition, which results in what Footnick (2007) calls a 'hidden language' [HL] (170). Contrary to the first type of language loss mentioned above, an HL exists when a language has been acquired as a native (or second) language, and later, becomes largely inaccessible to the speaker but not restructured or (partly) forgotten. Footnick further proposes that when the inaccessible language is an HL, the memory traces are still stored in the brain but are blocked from access by some unknown mechanism. Nevertheless, it is sensible to assume that attrition may occur at the levels of competence and of performance, as it would be impossible to separate the two concepts.

Several language attrition studies have been conducted among the different speech communities. For example, Micheal Clyne (1967) documented the effects of language contact situations on the first language competence/performance of German immigrants, mainly in terms of semantic and syntactic changes. Similarly, Margit Waas (1993) investigated first language attrition among first generation German immigrants to Sydney, from a sociolinguistic perspective. She considered socio-demographic variables, such as ethnic group affiliation versus non-affiliation, to be the most prominent in the process of L1 attrition.

It is generally established that language attrition does not occur because of internal or intra-linguistic factors alone, rather, other external, social factors also play an equally important role. Actually, the prominence of social factors leading to language attrition cannot be ignored. Such factors include sociolinguistic variables such as age, gender, L2 influence, language contact, bilingualism, language shift, and the amount of contact an individual has with the language in attrition.

Based on the above discussion, it is obvious to observe that there are two types of factors to explain language attrition, namely, linguistic factors and extralinguistic factors, which are discussed in the following sections.

### 1.10.1. Factors of Language Attrition

The available studies and literature on attrition mainly focus on linguistic factors in order to explain the process. The crucial questions are: which structures of language are most affected by attrition, and does attrition affect the grammar of a language universally or selectively. Different scholars with diverse perspectives have addressed these issues from several angles. According to Seliger (1991), "language attrition is selective, affecting some aspects of grammar more than others" (228). However, Cohen (1986) lists the various features that can be forgotten with respect to a word in the language undergoing attrition. These features

are: form, position, function, meaning, and each feature is related with other dimensions. Nevertheless, a few scholars argue that some structures of language are more susceptible to attrition than others. For example, Olshtain and Barzilay (1982) observe that "the items most susceptible to language attrition are infrequent, specific nouns" (140). However, Hutz's (2004) discussion reveals that lexicon is primarily and severely affected by language attrition, whereas morphological and syntactic structures seem to be resistant to language loss. Again, the question is: which aspects of grammatical change are more important indicators of attrition? Most researchers would agree that these changes are anything but random.

In bilingual settings, language loss can manifest as L1 or L2 loss. Some researchers view attrition as a reduction in an individual's language abilities, usually measured expressively in her/his L1, and they associate it with a lack of contact or non-use of the primary language. Seliger (1996) asserts that L1 attrition occurs as a natural outcome of acquiring another language but that this does not mean that this process is an automatic consequence of acquiring another language. Furthermore, for Pavlenko (2004), L1 attrition is not a process that leads to the total loss of L1 knowledge but is a convergence towards an L2, whereby attriters take up L2 structures in some aspects of grammar. However, based on the universal grammar (UG) framework, attrition is not some fort of random forgetting but is guided by principles to arrive at the most effective grammar that can serve both languages.

The regression hypothesis, initially proposed by R. Jakobson (1941), deals with the processes of learning and forgetting, and there exist two versions of it. According to the first version, based on chronology, the order in which attrition occurs is opposite to the order in which language is acquired. The second version, based on reinforcement (Köpke and Schmid, 2004), also called the inverse relation hypothesis by Yoshitomi (1994), states that what has been learnt best, that is, used/reinforced most often, is most resistant to loss.

Another hypothesis that explains the process of attrition is Andersen's (1982) linguistic feature hypothesis. It explains that if an item in the language in attrition is similar to the corresponding structure in the other language, it is more likely to be retained than a dissimilar one. Andersen examined both regression hypothesis and linguistic feature hypothesis and proposed that these hypotheses focus on two major areas of linguistic research. First, they state that the nature of the linguistic elements themselves—such as whether they are of high or low frequency, are marked or unmarked—is important in determining whether they will be lost. Second, these hypotheses propose that the relationship between the

corresponding structures of the dominant language and the language in attrition is a factor in language loss. Moreover, the extent of contrast between the structures will help determine what will be vulnerable to attrition.

Similarly, the much-debated Activation Threshold Hypothesis (ATH)[2] proposed by M. Paradis (1985) was initially accounted for differential recovery in polyglot aphasia. However, Köpke (2004) applied it to the study of language attrition. It specifies the relationship between frequency of use of a linguistic item and its activation and availability to the language user. Here, it is assumed that linguistic items have thresholds that change based on frequency of use. Low activation thresholds yield faster and easier access than higher thresholds. Activation and inhibition mechanisms appear to account for the control of multiple languages in the brain, as well as for changing dominance patterns. The Activation Threshold Hypothesis, according to Paradis (1985), suggests that items (or languages) that are more frequently activated need less stimulation to be reactivated than items (or languages) that are less frequently activated. In other words, as remarked by Gürel (2004), when a particular linguistic item has a high activation threshold, more activating impulses are needed to reactivate it. Within this framework, attrition is predicted in the form of reduced accessibility as a natural consequence of lack of language use, a fact strongly acknowledged by Köpke and Schmid (2004).

Finally, according to the Uniqueness Principle, for any semantic concept, there is only one syntactic or morphological realisation. In the case of bilingualism, a semantic concept may be realised in grammar of two different languages. However, Seliger (1996) recounts that in the process of primary language attrition, the two languages of the bilingual have a semantic concept or function in common that is expressed in two different ways but that only one of these two realisations available to the speaker will survive.

However, there is considerable anecdotal evidence that shows that lexical items dominate as the elements most vulnerable to attrition. In this context, Gross (2004) observes that content morphemes, represented by idioms and other expressions, are more vulnerable to attrition than early or late systems of morphemes. Gross further argues that this "is because of the architecture of the mental lexicon and the asymmetry in how different types of morphemes are activated" (289). Yet, the functional load of the words, that is, the frequency and importance of the words in language use, is also an important factor of lexical attrition. Another psychological framework described by Köpke and Schmid (2007) concerning attrition research includes the notions of 'activation and inhibition', which are

directly related to the frequency of use or reinforcement of a linguistic system of a particular linguistic item/structure. For Schmid (2004), activation and inhibition mechanisms appear to account for the control of multiple languages in the brain as well as for changing dominance patterns. The Activation Threshold Hypothesis, according to Schmid, assumes that items (or languages) that are more frequently activated need less stimulation to be reactivated than items (or languages) that are less frequently activated, a fact also acknowledged by Paradis (1985, 1993). Within this framework, attrition is thus presented in the form of reduced accessibility as a natural consequence of lack of language use. Anderson (1982) proposed that low-frequency items would be more vulnerable to attrition, and this assumption has been validated by experimental data.

However, it can be suggested that different outcomes result from different language shift scenarios and that an abrupt shift in language affects the lexicon less than a gradual shift does. This position is supported by the observation that expressions borrowed to replace existing terms rather than to enrich vocabulary are often found in cases where both language shift and attrition are underway; a postulation supported by many scholars, including Hagen (1990).

In summary, there are diverse opinions based on theoretical arguments and empirical evidence concerning the nature of grammatical structures that are affected during the process of attrition. The present study attempts to explore the issue of attrition in the case of the Kashmiri language and looks for possible factors that explain it.

### 1.10.2. Extra-Linguistic Factors

In addition to the main linguistic factors, the other reasons for language attrition have been discussed under this heading of 'extra-linguistic factors'. A proposal formulated by Yağmur (2004) suggested that an integrated framework synthesising sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic paradigms is necessary to theorise language attrition. It is not possible to investigate language attrition and maintenance based on linguistic tests alone, without a careful description of factors such as social context and attitudes and beliefs of speakers. According to Köpke and Schmid (2004), the following five extra-linguistic factors contribute to attrition:

I. Age of individual at onset of L2 acquisition (simultaneous/ early/late)
II. Age of individual at onset of L1 attrition
III. Level of education achieved

IV. Attitudes held
V. Frequency, amount, and context of use of the attritioning language

However, Hutz (2004) says that "extra-linguistic factors, including age, education, identity, amount of L1 contact, as well as attitudinal and motivational factors, are often found to be crucial predictor variables in terms of language attrition" (191). Thus, three significant extra-linguistic factors of attrition can be summarised as:

I. Age of departure: in accordance with the sensitive period hypothesis, attrition data suggests that the younger children are when they change their linguistic environment, the higher the probability that the L2 will replace the L1.
II. Education level: a high level of education leads to explicit knowledge of a language, which makes interference with implicit competence less likely.
III. Contact with L1: the amount of contact with the L1 has direct consequences for the frequency of its activation, and this influences the psycholinguistic balance between the two languages.

Age is an area of concern for those addressing the psycholinguistic aspect of attrition. In their discussion of language and ageing, de Bot and Makoni (2005) indicate that ageing involves changes at three different levels, which interact with one another: physical, cognitive, and social. Thus, linguistic decline may have its basis in biological changes but the interaction between psychological and social changes also affects the rate of decline.

Nevertheless, attrition and acquisition are tightly linked. Attrition is influenced by the same factors that led to the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), which assumes that due to brain maturation constraints, L2 learning becomes more difficult after a certain age. Surprisingly, no consensus has been reached so far with respect to the existence and the age limits of a critical period or a time frame known as the 'sensitive period'. Jamshidiha and Marefat (2006) suggest that younger children are better L2 learners due to maturational constraints, and consequently, more readily forget their L1. According to Köpke and Schmid (2004), the critical period for phonology is generally assumed to end earlier than that for syntax and morphology. However, for Köpke, a 'sensitive period' gradually declines after the age of 6-7 years. Thus, with respect to attrition, the sensitive period hypothesis is more appropriate than the critical age hypothesis.

Studies indicate that the age of onset of bilingualism and the age of onset of attrition are crucial. There is converging evidence, as explored in several studies—Isurin (2000), Kaufman and Aronoff (1991), Schmitt (2004), Seliger (1991), and Turian and Altenberg (1991)—that an L1 system can indeed be eroded to quite a dramatic degree if the attrition process sets in well before puberty. In other words, more signs of attrition were observed in respondents who have been out of a particular language context before puberty. Olshtain, (1983), Kuhberg, (1992), and Olshtain, (1986), obtained similar findings for L2 attrition among children. However, Köpke (2004) contends that attrition is much more severe in children than in adults.

Similarly, among the extra-linguistic factors, level of education also influences the process of attrition. Jaspaert and Kroon's (1989) pilot study on attrition among 30 Italian immigrants in the Netherlands, measured by scores on various language tests (vocabulary, text editing, sentence correction) and general comprehension (measured by a picture-sentence matching task), showed education level to be the most significant factor in the tests where there was evidence for attrition, namely, text editing and vocabulary tests. Literacy may prevent attrition in several ways—from a sociolinguistic perspective, literacy allows the speaker to maintain contact with the L1 through reading, which might be an important source of confirming evidence for L1 attrition.

It is evident that language attrition might depend largely on the amount of contact an attritioning individual has with L1 speakers. However, contact may depend on two factors: opportunity and choice. The first factor is largely (though not entirely) outside an individual's control; the second, is not. Conversely, contact is reduced to a smaller number of people in a certain context such that language use is confined to specific domains, for example, the informal and the family. It is also possible that an L1 individual, although in contact with other L1 speakers, chooses not to use that language in interacting with them. This factor often depends on the prestige associated with that particular language.

### 1.10.3. Attrition, Language, and Identity Shift

The ultimate outcome of language contact is shift and/or language loss or language gain. Language attrition and loss are aspects of language change. Language shift has to be seen as both positive and negative. For that reason, language shift, as explained by Davies (1986), means, "language gain as well as language loss" (125). Like the relationship between borrowing and attrition, many studies explore the correlation

between attrition and shift. The most prominent difference between attrition and shift, as recognised by scholars like Yağmur (2004), is that "shift is intergenerational and attrition is usually intragenerational" (136). However, for Pavlenko (2004), language shift is seen as a move away from L1 structures, boundaries, or values towards those specified by the L2 (53). Gross (2004), while exploring language attrition and shift, pointed out that L1 attrition is the restructuring of the L1 linguistic system according to L2 patterns, under the psycholinguistic pressure of bilingualism. However, L1 attrition may also be internally induced, in the sense that some changes are motivated by universal strategies based on markedness. For example, "L1 attrition is distinguished from language shift in that attrition is intragenerational, whereas language shift is intergenerational" explains Gross (284). There is a correlation between language shift and attrition, though both have different reasons and consequences. However, there are studies that illustrate that attrition is an outcome of language shift and is the first step towards language loss. This study also looks into the various aspects of attrition and shift among the Kashmiri speech community by adopting a similar methodology.

In recent years, issues of identity theory have been discussed largely within research on both bilingualism at large, and language attrition in perticular. Interestingly, on the one hand, (the second) language acquisition has long been a subject of considerable scientific interest from various disciplines, including applied linguistics. On the other hand, only a limited number of studies have investigated (the first) language attrition with reference to psychological and philosophical phenomena such as the self and identity. Further, psychological, philosophical, and sociological studies about identity have paid little or no attention to the relationship between identity and forgetting the mother tongue. Questions concerning the socio-psychological consequences of language forgetting, such as whether or not it affects an individual's identity, have been the focus of writers and philosophers like E. Hoffman (1989)[3], and J. Kristeva (2000), rather than of researchers.

Identity, as discussed earlier, is a cognitive construct, and language can be seen as an inseparable part of identity. For socio-psychological investigations, the focus is on an individual speaker's language systems and on the development and portrayal of identities. This line of investigation is based on the recognition of the fact that language is one of the most important factors of identity and identification; people speak like the people they want to be like, and they use the way they talk to signal aspects of their own personality. Another important social-psychological approach to the relationship between language and identity is Ethnolinguistic Vitality

Theory (EV). Giles, et al. (1977) proposed this theory to understand the role of socio-structural variables in inter-group relations, cross-cultural communication, second language learning, mother tongue maintenance, language shift, and language loss. According to Giles, et al., the vitality of an ethnolinguistic group is defined as "that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in inter-group situations" (308). Giles, et al. further explain that status, demographics, institutional support, and control factors combine to make up the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups. A group's strengths and weaknesses in each of these domains can be assessed to provide a rough classification of ethnolinguistic groups as having low, medium, or high vitality. Low vitality groups are most likely to go through linguistic assimilation and are not considered a distinctive collective group. Conversely, high vitality groups are likely to maintain their language and distinctive cultural traits in multilingual settings. In the present study, low vitality groups include the less educated, elderly, and rural people who retain native cultural and linguistic traits, whereas high vitality groups include the young, rural, and educated respondents who are less acquainted with native cultural and linguistic traits.

Attrition, which is an outcome of language contact situations, may lead to language shift, and subsequently, language loss. This would consequently lead to a transition and shift in the identity associated with the language, which goes through attrition. It can be concluded that the process of language shift is homologous to the process of identity shift. In fact, language contact is often associated with transitions in population, economy, and polity, which may lead to either multiculturalism, changing language roles, language shift, or to language loss. If it leads to changing language roles, language shift, or language loss, it may ultimately lead to changes in the linguistic, cultural, and political identities of the group undergoing the shift and/or language loss. The following figure shows that there is a correlation between language and identity shift, which is mediated by language attrition. The correlation between language loss and identity loss is reciprocal.

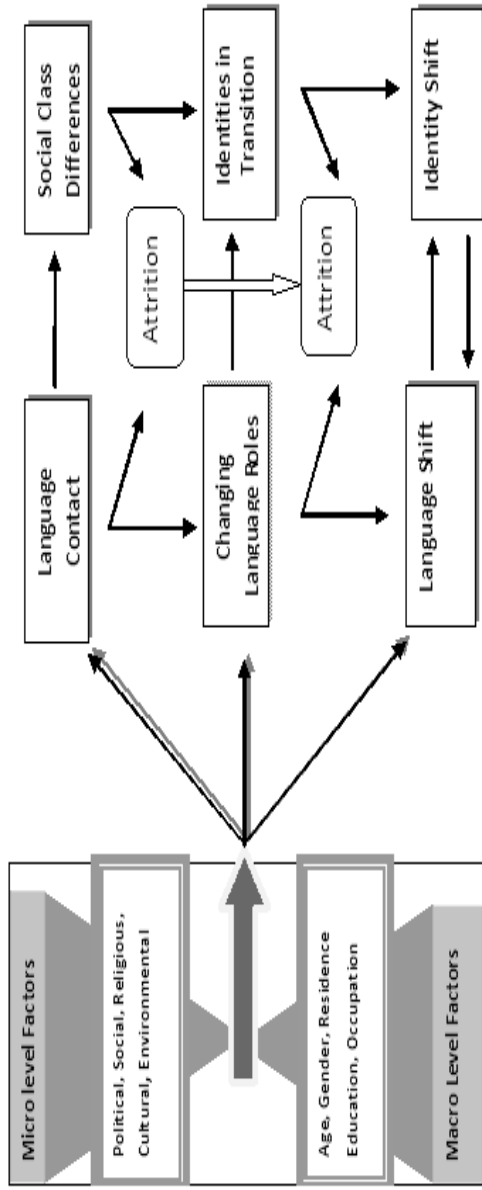



Fig. 1-1 Schematic representation of the correlations among language shift, attrition, and identity

## 1.11. Notes on Methodology

Social scientists divide research methodologies into two categories: quantitative and qualitative. Nevertheless, looking at the merits and demerits of adopting such methodologies, some social scientists advocate the use of triangulation or a combination of the two. Employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques, this study utilises multiple sources of data. However, the data collected through a questionnaire survey provides the most important part of the data for the study. Before interviewing them, the respondents were informed about the nature of the present study to address any doubts they may have had, and their informed consent was then obtained. The author articulated and explained each question to the respondents, and they had the freedom to answer or not to answer the questions.

In addition to the questionnaire, a structured interview schedule was prepared to collect qualitative data, specifically, to measure the extent and nature of language attrition. After conducting the pilot study, it was felt necessary to obtain data from secondary sources such as the media, education, and government bureaus.

Further, qualitative data was collected through unstructured, in-depth interviews. The criterion for the selection of people for the in-depth interview was based on the interest shown by the respondents in continuing the discussion on the various aspects of the linguistic issues at hand. A total of five in-depth interviews were conducted, mainly in places where the respondents felt comfortable.

It may be noted that it was not easy to collect data from a sensitive place like Kashmir. Keeping in mind the sensitivities and the prevailing circumstances of the area, the respondents were assured that their responses would be kept strictly confidential and would be used for research purposes only. An attempt was made to have a purposive (Gall, et al., 1996) yet diverse sample of respondents, covering different demographic, social, and economic groups of the population. The data was collected mostly from three districts: Anantnag, Kulgam, and Pulwama. However, the other forms of data, including visual data, data from the mass media and from educational institutions, were collected from almost the entire valley of Kashmir. It may be noted that the summer capital Srinagar was not included in the survey; being the summer capital, and thus business and tourist hub, Srinagar is more heavily affected by the process of modernisation than are other parts of Kashmir. Therefore, it can be argued that any linguistic change taking place in the Kashmir Valley happens in

Srinagar at a more rapid pace. Thus, the results obtained from the peripheral districts can be extended to Srinagar as well.

One of the important stages in a survey is the identification of a population to be surveyed. In practice, having access to all the members of a population is often impossible due to the shortage of temporal, financial, and other related constraints. In such situations, the researcher can access participants from a population that is already available. This strategy is referred to as 'convenience sampling' (Gall, et al., 1996). However, the goal of the researcher is to generalise the findings and interpretations of the study to a larger population. This is achieved by including diverse types of people in the sample.

For the present study, a total sample of 140 respondents (Appendix A) was selected for the survey. Data was collected from 110 respondents through a questionnaire survey, and 30 respondents were interviewed using a structured interview schedule. It was observed in the pilot study that similar responses were obtained from similar categories, so it was decided to take only a small number of respondents from similar categories. Care was taken to ensure a heterogeneous sample, covering rural and urban areas, males and females, and younger and older informants.

The structured interview schedule consisted of two main parts. The first was designed to examine the nature and extent of attrition of the Kashmiri language among native Kashmiri speakers in the Kashmiri speech community. In order to explore the nature of attrition among native speakers, a list of 40 Kashmiri words was prepared, which comprised different items, including those related to the kitchen, household, and certain culture-specific items, which were either previously used or are still being used in some places but with different (changed) names. The participants were provided the description of the listed words either in English/Urdu or Kashmiri, and they were asked to produce the names of the words in Kashmiri. The researcher himself filled the responses, and noted the time taken by the respondents for producing each word and whether the words produced were correct or incorrect. The time taken for the production of each Kashmiri word was noted to investigate the difference in word processing, and to know whether the time taken was more than the normal word processing time. The aim was to ascertain the extent of loss of the native lexicon, and to examine which language was compensating for this loss.

In addition to the above items, a question was added with regard to the amount of attrition of Kashmiri proverbs and idiomatic expressions among native Kashmiri speakers. Proverbs/idiomatic expressions are considered important components of any language, which speakers conceptualise in

later stages rather than in daily/ordinary communication. Twenty-four Kashmiri proverbs/idiomatic expression were selected randomly. The researcher recited the proverbs and the participants were supposed to recall the meaning and usage of these expressions. The responses were divided into four categories: (i) those who know only the meaning; (ii) those who know the meaning and the usage; (iii) those who know related meanings but not the exact meaning; and, (iv) those who know neither the meaning nor the usage of the listed proverbs/idiomatic expressions.

The third and last question was intended to identify whether the participant(s) knew any Kashmiri nursery rhymes (in full or part), which they were then asked to recall and recite. It was also asked if they knew any nursery rhymes in another language (like Urdu or English). The purpose was to ascertain the extent of attrition, and to identify the direction of language shift in the younger generation.

The mass media in any speech community is considered an important reflection of popular language use. For the present study, data was also collected from mass media. The content of both electronic and print media was analysed, which was mostly in qualitative form. Different programmes broadcast over radio/television like news items, serials, songs and music were analysed, and the time slot given to the different language/s used in the different programmes was also examined. In addition to the state-sponsored television channels, programmes broadcast over the local cable television channels were also analysed. Information was also collected about the content and quantity of newspapers published from Kashmir in different languages.

Most researchers working on linguistic identities ignore the importance of visual data, particularly that of signboards. A signboard is a board carrying a sign or notice, commonly used for the advertisement of products, events, business establishments, real estate sites, offices, public transport vehicles, etc. They are also used for warning and educational purposes. Signboards represent an overt and popular view of the language use of any speech community. Moreover, the language used in street signs, road signs, advertising boards, billboards, business establishment signs, shop signs, receipts and bills paid to customers, and invitation cards was examined qualitatively and quantitatively. The researcher was keen to investigate whether the change observed in the streetscape manifested a broader change in the language use of the Kashmiri speech community.

In order to know the actual language practices in educational institutes, data was also collected from different schools, including private and government ones. The researcher tried to find out the actual medium of education and instruction in these schools. He conducted some informal

interviews and discussions with various teachers and principals of the schools. The language(s) spoken in the contexts of student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, and teacher-teacher interaction, in and outside the classroom and school premises, were also studied.

In addition to primary data, secondary data was collected from different sources such as the district-level and state-level government/ semi-government offices, census of India, other government official records, and government bureaus. Three unstructured interviews were conducted, and key informants such as the school principals, teachers, government officials, traders, politicians (from the mainstream and the separatists), and people belonging to different quarters of life were interviewed.

After the completion of data collection, all of the data was coded and properly analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel. Codes were generated in order to include all possible responses and to categorise and sub-categorise them into different categories mentioned in the questionnaire. After this process of codification, tabulation and quantification, the data was fed into SPSS (13.5) and Excel (Windows XP, Microsoft Office 2007). These were used to obtain mean scores, frequency charts, standard deviations, correlation coefficients, graphs, and tables. Appropriate statistical analyses of the data were carried out to draw inferences.

To support and validate the findings of the quantitative data, qualitative data was also collected. The findings from the quantitative analysis are corroborated by the findings obtained from the qualitative data. In his examination of analytic methods for qualitative data, Potter (1996) noted that there is not one prevailing or ideal method of data analysis in qualitative research, and that as each research project is unique, the researcher is required to construct a procedure that allows him/her to extract the most insightful meaning from the evidence collected. To achieve this in the current study, different methods of data analysis were carried out. In addition to other methods, the respondensts were allowed to speak freely about any issue concerning the study.

The study's quantitative data was analysed using simple uni-variate, bi-variate, and multi-variate techniques. In terms of uni-variate analysis, simple frequency distributions have been used to describe the characteristics of the respondents. Bi-variate analysis was done to understand the relationship between any two given variables.

Content analysis was employed to analyse the content on television, radio, and in newspapers. According to Ole R. Holsti and Addison Wesley (1969), content analysis must be systematic in that the inclusion and

exclusion of content or categories are done according to consistently applied rules. Following these prescriptions, and to locate the content concerning language-identity, each interview transcript and the statements in them were properly marked.

The data is presented in different forms such as charts, graphs, and tables in the proceeding chapters.

# CHAPTER TWO

# THE KASHMIRI SPEECH COMMUNITY: LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

## 2.1. Historical Overview

The oldest recorded document about Kashmir is the *Nilamat Purana*, which describes legends pertaining to the origin of Kashmir. It records the cultural and social history of the life of the people in the Kashmir Valley from the fifth to the eighth century. The *Nilamat Purana,* with its 1,453 verses, deals primarily with Kashmir and its original inhabitants, their style of living, religion, customs, and festivals. The second oldest and authentically documented historical manuscript about Kashmir is the *Rajtarangini*, or 'chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir', written by Kalhana in Sanskrit. *Rajtarangini* is a significant document from a socio-political and historical perspective. According to Lawrence, it was started in AD 1148. Although Kalhana himself mentions several historians as his predecessors, none of their works has been identified. *Rajtarangini* can be recognised as a reliable testimony of the seventh century and onwards.

King Ashoka is believed to have laid the foundation of the two thousand-year-old city of *Srinagri*, as the capital of his kingdom, which was later renamed Srinagar—'the city of Sun'. Lawrence mentions that Srinagar became the capital of Kashmir around AD 960. People from other parts of the valley also call Srinagar '*shähar*', meaning city. Avantivarmen, who ruled Kashmir in the 11$^{th}$ century, built Avantipur (mid-way between Anantnag and Srinagar), as the new capital.

Kashmir came under the influence of various foreign regimes from time to time. The emperor Lalitaditya Muktapida ruled Kashmir from AD 724 to 760 and built the famous sun temple (the Martanda temple) on a plateau overlooking the town of Anantnag and the fresh springs of Mattan in the Liddar Valley. In the 12$^{th}$ century, Kashmir came under the influence of Muslim rulers from central Asia. Two Muslim adventurers, Shahmir from Khorasan, and Lanker Chak from Gilgit, came to Kashmir in the 13$^{th}$ century. Shahmir, the founder of the Shahmiri dynasty and of

Muslim rule in Kashmir, ruled Kashmir for over two hundred years. Balraj Madhok (1992) presumes that in the course of time, Shahmiris assimilated into Kashmiri culture, acquired the Kashmiri language, and adopted the Kashmiri way of life. In 1332, Turks, led by Zulkadur Khan, encountered Kashmir. The central Asian ruler, Sikander (1394-1416), invaded Kashmir and brought about mass conversion to Islam. In AD 1420, Zain-ul-Abdeen succeeded Sikander and brought about significant changes to sustain Kashmir's multiculturalism and religious pluralism. The Shahmiri dynasty was replaced by the Chak dynasty in AD 1561. Ghazi-Chak, the founder of the Chak dynasty, was a scion of Lanker Chak, the Muslim adventurer from Gilgit who came to Kashmir in the 13th century. The Chaks were Shias; therefore, the Shia sect of Islam got a foothold in Kashmir during the Chak rule. The Mughal army defeated Yousuf Shah, the last effective Chak ruler of Kashmir, during the reign of Akbar. His son, Yakub Shah, ruled Kashmir—for a short time—until he was defeated and displaced by the Mughals in AD 1686. The Mughal Emperors, particularly Akbar and his son Jahangir had a special liking for Kashmir. They made Kashmir their favourite summer resort, embellishing it with the famous Mughal gardens. With the collapse of Mughal power in 1752, Kashmir came under the administration of the Afghans. Nevertheless, the Sikhs, under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, wrested Kashmir from the Afghans in 1819. In 1820, Maharaja Ranjit Singh appointed the Dogra King, Gulab Singh, to rule the state. In 1846, the British defeated the Sikhs, and Gulab Singh, the Dogra ruler of Jammu, purchased the valley from the British in lieu of political and military favours on the battlefield. The present state was created on March 16, 1846, through a treaty between the British East India Company, acting on behalf of the British government, and Maharaja Gulab Singh in Amritsar. In 1947, the British rule in India ended with the creation of two new nations: India and Pakistan. Each of the 565 Indian states had to decide which of the two nations they preferred to join. During that time, Maharaja Hari Singh was ruling the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He preferred to remain independent and decided not to join either of the two nations. Nevertheless, when the Kabalis from North Waziristan encountered Kashmir, the Maharaja called the Indian government for help, which the government of India agreed to 'with the instrument of accession' with India, which was accepted by Lord Mountbatten, the Governor General of India, on October 27, 1947. It was the first time Indian troops marched into Kashmir, and the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India was carried out in exchange for receiving 'military aid'. Being a disputed state, an offer of plebiscite was made by the Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, in the United Nations Security

Council, in December 1947, and a council was made under the banner of the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP). After Nehru's offer of plebiscite on January 5, 1949, the UNCIP passed a resolution that stated: "The question of accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to India or Pakistan will be decided through the democratic methods of free and impartial plebiscite" (UN Resolution: Document no. S/1196, dated January 10, 1949). In the same year (1949), the Government of India promulgated Article 370, which gave special status to the state, and Karan Singh, the son of Hari Singh, became the ruler of Kashmir. In November 1951, Karan Singh was designated *Sader-i-Riysat*, meaning Governor. Bakshhi Ghulam Mohammad became the Prime Minister of the state in 1954. On March 30, 1965, Article 249 was formulated; according to it, designations like Prime Minister and President of the state were to be replaced with Chief Minister and Governor, respectively.

Since the Kashmir conflict during the partition of India in August 1947, which resulted in the creation of India and Pakistan, there have been four wars (1947, 1965, 1971, and 1999) over the disputed area of Kashmir. In 1984, the separatist movement started in the disputed areas of Kashmir, supported by Pakistan, demanding the plebiscite promised by Nehru according to the United Nations resolution.

What is interesting is that all the (historical) facts mentioned above have had an impact on the Kashmiri speech community in all spheres of life, including the linguistic context of the state.

## 2.2. The People and Geography: An Outline

Once called 'the jewel of Asia', the 'Asian Switzerland', and 'paradise on earth', Kashmir is geographically and culturally different from other parts of the continent, and has a fascinating historical legacy and cultural pluralism. Because of its geographical location, the Kashmir Valley has a distinct geo-political identity, which is different from the territories surrounding it, including across the Himalayan range, which remains snow-bound and impassable for four to six months in a year. Such reasons, presumes Madhok, provide an explanation for the question: why has Kashmir always been a separate kingdom or province of the various empires. The Mughal Emperor Jahangir not only acknowledged Kashmir's natural beauty but also its peace and prosperity by dedicating the famous Persian quote to it: "*Agar firdaus bar roo-e-zameen ast/Hameen ast-ohameen ast–o-hameen ast*", meaning, "if there is paradise on earth, this is it, this is it, this is it!" The natural beauty of Kashmir can perhaps be understood through the words of the famous Sanskrit poet Kalidasa, for

whom Kashmir is more beautiful than heaven and is the benefactor of supreme bliss and happiness.

The word 'Kashmir', meaning 'land desiccated off water', has been derived from the Sanskrit words *Ka* (water) and *Shimeera* (desiccate). The ancient Greeks called it *Kasperia* and the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang, who visited the valley around AD 631, called it *Kashi-Mi- Lo*. In modern times, the people of Kashmir have shortened it to *Kasheer*, in their tongue. The residents of Kashmir are known as 'Kashmiris' or 'Cashmirees'.

Jammu and Kashmir is the northern-most part of India (see map in Appendix B). The state consists of three divisions: Jammu, the Kashmir Valley, and Ladakh. Srinagar is the summer capital, and Jammu is the winter capital. Because of certain hidden political reasons, efforts were made to shift the summer capital from Srinagar to Parihaspura.[4] Recently, in the year 2006, one more (unsuccessful) attempt was made by the Mufti government to shift the capital to Parihaspura. The state is bound by China in the north, Afghanistan in the north-west, and Pakistan in the west. It is only in the south that the state is linked to India, such that the state boundaries of Himachal Pradesh (south) and Punjab (southwest) touch the southern boundary of Jammu and Kashmir.

The valley of Kashmir is approximately 134 kilometres in length, 32–40 kilometres in breadth, an average of 1800 metres above sea level, and nested in the Pirpanchaal range of the Himalayas. The legend that the Kashmir Valley was a vast lake, Satisar, in pre-historic times, corresponds with the results of geological observations. The sandstone rock at the western corner of the basin was most probably formed through volcanic action. The lake was drained by the deepening of the Baramulla gorge; the result of the slow process of erosion, spread over geological years. It is presumed that the 'drainer' of the lake was *Kashyap*, and thus, the valley was called *Kashap-mar*, which became Kashmir with the passage of time. This is presumably the reason why the word Kashmir is also considered a *Prakrit* compound with its components *Kas*, meaning 'a channel' and *Mir*, 'a mountain'—the compound word adding to 'a rock through'.

Scholars are divided on the issue of the ancestors of Kashmiris, and from time to time, different scholars have proposed diverse opinions and theories concerning the origin of the people of Kashmir. Modern researchers have established that during the Great Flood, which occurred in about 7000 BC, the valley of Kashmir was underwater. Of the whole of South Asia, Kashmir was the first land that came out of the water. It is for this reason that some people call Kashmir 'the Mother of the Earth'. Following that event, several tribes from the north, west, east, and lastly south went and settled there, the most prominent being the Nagas from

Thailand and the Kashas from Mesopotamia. From the beginning of its existence, the valley of Kashmir has been under the cultural dominance of the Hebrews, the Scythians, the Huns, the Kushans, the Tungans, and the Chinese.

Many scholars hold the view that Kashmiris are a true specimen of the Aryan race; nonetheless, the last authoritative word about their origin has not been articulated, so far. R. K. Kaul quotes Pandit Anand Koul[5], who firmly believes that Kashmir was a colony of Aryan immigrants from central Asia; their facial features, specifically fair complexion is representative of the Aryan race (40). Nevertheless, some scholars believe that Kashmiris belong to a 1200-year-old race of the Pashachas and the Nagas, and thus reject the theory of the Aryan-origin of Kashmiris. Some historians presume that the ancestors of Kashmiris are early immigrants from India proper. To the contrary, some scholars and Kashmiri historians like R. K. Parmu presume that Kashmiris originally hailed from Israel, because they resemble Israelites (Jews) in several ways. After the destruction of the Third Temple, the Israelites were dispersed all over the world. Among the twelve Israeli tribes, one tribe went missing, which is believed to have settled in Kashmir. Parmu's discussion states that those who support the Jewish origin of the Kashmiri race substantiate their arguments by providing examples such as:

I. The Kashmiris have surnames called *Ju,* which is a sign of Jewish identity
II. The shape of butcher knives used by Kashmiris and Israelites is similar
III. The men of both regions wear a similar kind of skullcap and in a similar fashion
IV. There is a close resemblance in the shape and style of the clothing of older women
V. The shape and style of wearing headscarves by women in both regions is alike
VI. There women of both regions share a similar way of dancing or *rouv*
VII. The women of both regions customarily celebrate the fortieth da*y af*ter delivery, which is a purely Jewish custom

Moreover, some local authors have presumed that the Lord Christ is buried in Srinagar, and most importantly, some have asserted that the Hebrew language is the origin of the Kashmiri language.

Nevertheless, most scholars from India and outside have refuted the theory of Jewish origin. Dar, for instance, offers a different opinion. He proposes that being at the crossroads of India, China, Afghanistan, and central Asia, Kashmir has had various waves of migrants who came and settled in the valley. Central Asians went there to learn about Buddhism, and Brahmins from India went to study Sanskrit and Kashmiri Shivism, both eliminating and/or assimilating the earlier Nagas. Sufis from Iran and Iraq encountered Kashmir in the 14th century with the mission to spread Islam and expand their trade. Dar further argues that all of these people adopted the same language, *Koshur*, albeit with minor differences between the language of the pandits and that of Kashmiri Muslims. However, Dar's position about the Kashmiri language is questionable, as the linguistic history of Kashmir indicates that not all of the foreign regimes that encountered Kashmir consented to support the growth or upliftment of the Kashmiri language. Thus, like other regimes, people from central Asia took with them their own culture and language (Persian). In fact, Persian in Kashmir dominated the literary, religious, and written discourses. It was employed as the language of the courts. However, the people of Kashmir never gave up the Kashmiri language, which continued to serve the purpose of being the spoken language. Kachru also acknowledges this position and asserts that "in its structure and vocabulary, the Kashmiri language has preserved features of extended language contact and convergence with contiguous typologically distinct languages" (23).

Several historians presume that Kashmiris arrived directly from central Asia and settled down there; their customs, lifestyle, and complexion resemble those of central Asian people in several ways. In fact, during their long and cherished history, Kashmiris encountered diverse civilizations, and Kashmir is inhabited by diverse faiths and different races—each of them distinct in their look, dress, food habits, customs, languages, and traditions— hence forming a diverse, pluralistic, and multicultural society. Kashmir has the distinction of having a unique cultural blend, geography, ethical, social entities from other parts of South Asia. Its different cultural forms like art and architecture, fairs and festivals, and rites and rituals articulate plenty about the linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity of Kashmir. In other words, Kashmir has a fascinating historical legacy, and cultural and religious inclusiveness and pluralism that have been characterised both in literature and folklore as *Kashmiriyat* (Kashmiriness)—an oft-mentioned, elusive term evoking the rich, pluralistic, cultural, and aesthetic traditions of the Kashmir Valley. The prominent religious groups found in Kashmir include Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, and Buddhists.

According to the 2001 census, the population density of the state was 45.31 $km^2$ (with a total population of 10,143,700), and the literacy rate was 54.46%. The state ranks $6^{th}$ in area and $17^{th}$ in population among the states and union territories of India. It consists of 14 old and 4 newly constituted districts (2007). It is interesting to note that the assertion of identity statements starts even in the naming of places. For instance, this is clearly seen in the naming process and identity affiliation of the district Anantnag. Kashmiri Muslims called it Islamabad, whereas Hindus and Sikhs called it Anantnag. However, Lawrence also used the word 'Islamabad' (44). Public transport vehicles going to Anantnag from various districts use Urdu signboards displaying *Islamabad*. However, following the separatist movement, the Indian security forces have not allowed the use of the word 'Islamabad' (in written or spoken form). The masses and public transporters resisted using Anantnag; instead, they used 'Khanabal', which is the name of a small town near Anantnag. Similarly, in the year 2009, when the Indian Railways started operating in the Kashmir Valley for the first time, the Northern Railways named the station in Budgam district, 'Rajwansheer'. However, the station name triggered a controversy, as people claimed that no village by that name exists in the district. Finally, the people forced the government to change the name to 'Mazhama Railway Station', which is the name of the village where the station is located. Thus, it can be concluded that the naming process of persons or geographic locations entails identity assertions at socio-cultural, religious, and linguistic levels, overtly or covertly.

## 2.3. The Kashmiri Language: A Historical Perspective and Classification

According to the censuses of 2000 and 2011, there were approximately 5,554,496 and 5,362,349 Kashmiri speakers, respectively. A Srinagar-based cultural and research NGO, Experimental Moving Images & Theater Association (X-MITA) reveals that 92 lakh (around 42%) people of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) are Kashmiri speakers. Data collected by the research department of X-MITA between July 2009 and July 2015 in collaboration with district officials reveals, "Koushur, Pahari, Dogri, Shina, Gogri, Balti, Burushaski, and Ladakhi are the main languages spoken in J&K." The study estimates that Koushur is spoken by 9.2 million, Pahari and Gojri by 6.9 million, Dogri by 3.8 million, Balti by 1.1 million, Shina and Burushaski by 0.8 million, and Ladakhi by 0.34 million (see Appendix C).

The Kashmiri language is one of the 22 languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. It is also a part of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The other regional languages recognised in the Sixth Schedule of the state include Dogri, Ladakhi, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, and Gojri.

Although there has been much debate about controversial issues such as the origin of Kashmiris, the language, and its genealogical classification, nevertheless, no serious attempt has been made in its native land to explore the origin, growth, and development of the Kashmiri language. Like Kashmir, the Kashmiri language is also bordered by different geolinguistic zones; for example, it is surrounded by Shina (a Dardic language) in the north, in the east by Tibeto-Burman languages (e.g., Balti, Ladakhi), in the west by Pahari and Punjabi dialects, and in the south by Dogri and Pahari dialects. Just as there are diverse opinions about the origin of the people of Kashmir, there are different positions about the history and origin of the Kashmiri language and its genealogical classification. The origin, growth and developmental stages of Kashmiri language, like Prakrit and Apbhramsha, and its genealogical classification are matters of highly contentious scholarly debates.

One of the leading English dailies from Kashmir '*The Greater Kashmir*' has initiated a debate on the issue of the history of Kashmiri and has published editorials of different writers holding diverse ideologies with contrary positions regarding the origin and genealogical classification of the language. In fact, there is always a constructed and ideologically motivated version of history, classification of nations, communities, and social groups, and their languages.

As far as the existence of the Kashmiri language is concerned, in A. Koul's opinion, it is an independently accepted language since or before the 12$^{th}$ century, when Kalhana wrote the famous *Rajtarangini*, where he mentioned certain Sanskritised versions of Kashmiri proverbs. Several thinkers argue that Kashmiri had been a 'spoken tongue' from even earlier times, while Sanskrit was being used for educational and literary purposes in Kashmir. However, Bamzai holds a different position concerning the origin of the language. Sanskrit and Persian, according to Bamzai, were the medium of polite literature; they became the domain of the learned few. The masses spoke *Prakrit*, which, with the admixture of words and phrases from the many languages spoken on the borders of the Kashmir Valley, assumed the form of a new, vernacular Kashmiri. He further illustrates that during its early phase, Kashmiri was predominantly composed of Sanskrit words and idioms; its character changed considerably with the advent of Muslim rule in the 14$^{th}$ century, when

Persian and Arabic words and expressions entered its lexicon, shaping it into the form used these days. However, S. K. Chatterjee presumes that before the development of the Kashmiri language proper (which, as in the case of the other Aryan languages of India, took place after AD 1000); there were *Prakrit* and *Apabhramsa* stages of Kashmiri. Yet, he admits that there are no specimens of what may be called a Kashmiri *Prakrit* and a Kashmiri *Apabhramsa*. O. Koul contends that "it was during the Sultanate period that Kashmiri attained a distinct status; though it's last known literature is datable to the 13th century" (2). In other words, the origin and different stages of growth and development of the Kashmiri language in its native land have not been seriously investigated; hence, it warrants exploration.

Kachru has appropriately called it a 'prolonged scholarly debate' (23) when it comes to the origin and linguistic affinity of the Kashmiri language. Many scholars have contested the issue of the genealogical classification of the Kashmiri language. Scholars like Grierson (1919), Turner (1927), Bloch (1934), Morgenstierne (1961), Fussman (1972), Kachru (1969), Strand (1973), O. Koul and Schmid (1984), O. Koul (2005), Kak (2003), and A. Koul (2008) have discussed and reviewed the classification of the Kashmiri language. For instance, Braj B. Kachru stresses on the linguistic characteristics of Kashmiri. Strand presents his observations on Kafir languages. Koul and Schmidt review the literature on the classification of the Dardic languages and investigate the linguistic characteristics or features of these languages, with special reference to the Kashmiri and Shina languages. Kashmiri shares its lexicon and a number of grammatical features with other Dardic languages, a fact acknowledged by A. Koul and Schmidt (1984), though it also shares some characteristics with modern Indo-Aryan languages. In this context, A. Koul has appropriately pointed out that "no adequate, linguistically-convincing evidence has been put forth to support the linguistic classification of Kashmiri and its exact relationship either with Sanskrit or the Dardic languages" (2). Emeneau considers Kashmiri a Dardic language of Indo-Aryan origin. Similarly, Grierson (1906) classifies Kashmiri under the Dardic group of languages. He believes that a sub-group of languages, which he terms, *Piš:ca,* or Dardic, broke out of the Indo-Aryan family after the significant split that gave birth to the Indo-Aryan languages. Dardic, according to Grierson, has been considered a sub-group of the Indo-Aryan family. Grierson's (1919) genealogical schemata can be shown as:

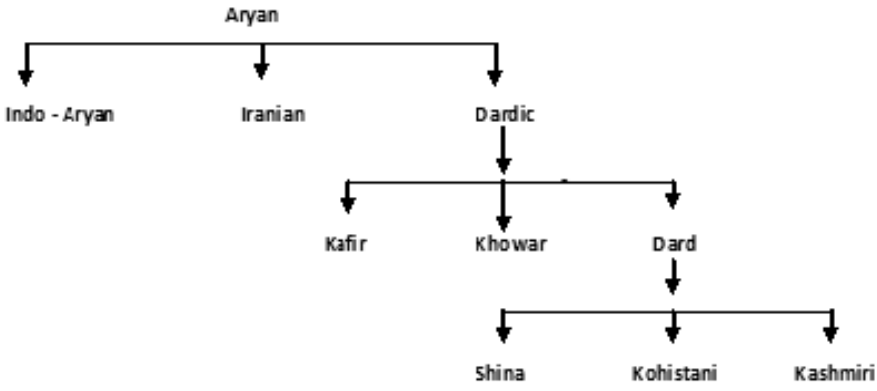



Fig. 2-1 Grierson's genealogical schemata of the Kashmiri language

It clearly indicates that Grierson has classified Kashmiri under the Dardic group of languages. According to Grierson's classification, the Dardic group includes Shina, Kashmiri, Kashtawari, Poguli, Siraji, Rambai, and Kohistani. He considers the Dardic languages to be a sub-family of Aryan languages and argues that they are "neither of Indian nor of Iranian origin, but (forming) a third branch of Aryan stock, which separated from the parent before the Iranian languages had developed all their peculiar characteristics" (4). 'Dardic', according to Grierson, is only a geographical convention.

Nevertheless, Turner (1927), Bloch (1934), and some other scholars have expressed their disagreement with Grierson's threefold classification of Aryan. A noted indigenous scholar, Bazaz, also presumes a Dardic basis for Kashmiri. For him, it is the language of the people of the Dardic group, who had settled down there earlier, and it has more of a resemblance with Persian. Similarly, scholars like Grierson (1919), Morgenstierne (1961), and Fussman (1972) classify Kashmiri under the Dardic group of the Indo-Aryan languages. Chatterji, a famous Indian philologist, agrees with the view of Grierson and other scholars, and emphasises that "the Kashmiri language is a result of a very large overlaying of a Dardic base with Indo-Aryan elements" (256). However, neither Grierson nor Chatterji has been able to explain precisely what they mean by a Dardic base. Nonetheless, for O. Koul, the term Dardic is stated to be "...only a geographical convention and not a linguistic expression" (1). It is significant to remark here that Boris Zakharyin, working within a quantitative typological framework, also concludes that Kashmiri belongs to the Indo-Aryan language family. Similarly, Chatterji (1963) conjectures

that "like other Indo-Aryan languages, Kashmiri has developed out of the Indo-European family of languages and is to be considered a branch of Indo-Aryan, like Hindi, Punjabi, etc" (256). Dardic languages, in Morgenstierne's opinion (1961), "contain absolutely no features that cannot be derived from old Indo-Aryan and Dardic languages (Kashmiri, Shina, Indus Kohistani, Khowar, Kalsha, Pashai, Tirahi)" (139). On the one hand, Kashmiri is different from Indo-Aryan languages in certain phonological, morphological, and syntactic features; but on the other hand, Kashmiri also has a close resemblance with other languages spoken in the closely related geolinguistic zones. "Kashmiri is closely related to Shina and some other languages of the north-west frontier. It also shares some morphological features, such as pronominal suffixes, with Sindhi and Lahanda", asserts O. Koul (1).

However, some scholars argue that among the Indo-European languages, Kashmiri, Shina, and several other local tongues (spoken over much of the northern areas and in a small portion of Kargil) form a distinct Dardic group, whose area of dominance extends across the northern part of the north-west Frontier Province of Pakistan and into northeastern Afghanistan. Whether or not this group constitutes a separate sub-family within the Indo-European family is a question still debated by linguists. Kashmiri, despite accounting for the largest number of speakers in the state, occupies only a relatively small area centering on the Valley of Kashmir.

Moreover, it is also argued that Kashmiri is an Indo-Aryan language, and is related to Sanskrit in the same way that other modern Indian languages are. "Koshur, the language of Kashmiris, is said to be a *Prakrit* of the pure and original Sanskrit", remarks Lawrence (454). The relation of Sanskrit to Kashmiri is substantiated by the argument that Kashmir was considered a great seat of Sanskrit learning from the very beginning, which confirms the presence of the Sanskrit language in Kashmir from a very early period. The second argument in support of the Sanskrit base of Kashmiri states that most Kashmiri lexical items have a Sanskrit base. According to this position, Sanskrit is related to Kashmiri not as a daughter language but as a sister language. To the contrary, Grierson's explanation of this position suggests that the longtime existence of Sanskrit in Kashmir cannot justify the statement that Kashmiri had originated from Sanskrit. Grierson further contends that the mere presence of a specific language in a particular region for a long time does not mean that the other language(s) of the region originated from that particular language. For example, Persian had been in India for a long time (during the Muslim influence), but it would be irrational to argue that Indian languages have originated from Persian. As far as the resemblance of the

lexicon is concerned, in Grierson's view, the lexicon of the Urdu language is based mainly on Persian and Arabic words. However, Urdu has not originated from these two languages. Grierson further explains that the word order of Kashmiri is different from other Indian languages, which have a close resemblance with Sanskrit.[6] Kashmiri has its own lexicon, which is similar to Sanskrit lexicon. Sarwari's discussion in this context shows that Kashmiri had been in contact with Sanskrit for a long time, since they were spoken in the same geolinguistic area; consequently, it borrowed a number of words and some linguistic features from Sanskrit.

Nonetheless, some Kashmiri scholars, such as Bamzai, disagree with Grierson's view. For Bamzai, Kashmiri was initially the language of the Kashmiri Brahmans, so its source should be old Sanskrit, used in Kashmir. However, A. Koul recognises Grierson's stand and asserts that at the lexical level, Kashmiri has been largely influenced by Sanskrit, which has made some scholars to believe that it has been derived from Sanskrit. With respect to the origin of Kashmiri, Koul further illustrates that "it is believed that the masses spoke a kind of *Prakrit* with the admixture of words from many languages spoken on the border of the valley, which assumed the form of a new vernacular Kashmiri" (2). The Kashmiri language encountered Sanskrit and Persian and was influenced by these languages mostly at the lexical level, extending its vocabulary, but its existence as an independent language has been so irrespective of Persian and Sanskrit.

Different people belonging to different language typologies made their way to Kashmir, and it had its due impact on the Kashmiri lexicon, which also proves to be a rationale for people holding diverse opinions about the genealogical classification of the Kashmiri language. Lawrence, while acknowledging the mixed nature of the Kashmiri lexicon, summarises that "out of every 100 Kashmiri words, 25 will be Sanskrit, 40 Persian, 15 Hindustani, and 10 Arabic; the remaining will be Tibetan, Turki, Dogri, and Punjabi" (454). Although the Dardic base of Kashmiri is in a more established position, there is no absolute theory about the origin and genealogical classification of the Kashmiri language in its native land, and the question is still open for exploration. Moreover, the classification of Kashmiri under the Dardic group of languages needs further investigation.

### 2.3.1. Dialectal Survey

The Encyclopedia Britannica (2008) defines Kashmiri as:

> The language spoken in the vale of Kashmir and the surrounding hills. By origin, it is a Dardic language but it has become predominantly Indo-Aryan

> in character, reflecting the history of the area. The Kashmiri vocabulary is mixed, containing Dardic, Sanskrit, Panjabi, and Persian elements. Religious differences are evident in vocabulary and choice of alphabet. Muslims employ Persian and Arabic words freely; they also use the Persian form of the alphabet to write Kashmiri, although the Persian alphabet is not truly suited to the task because it lacks symbols for the many Kashmiri vowel sounds. Kashmiri Hindus favour words derived from Sanskrit and write Kashmiri in the Sarada alphabet, a script of Indian origin. There is a small amount of Kashmiri literature. The only important spoken dialects are Kishtawari, Poguli, and Rambani.

The above passage recognises two different varieties of Kashmiri; the first variety is with relatively more Persian lexical items, and the second is loaded with the lexicon of Sanskrit. Both varieties have employed two different alphabets and writing systems, adopted by two diverse religious groups.

However, Kashmiri constitutes two types of dialects: geolinguistic (regional) and social. As far as the social dialects of Kashmiri are concerned, there are two types: Hindu Kashmiri and Muslim Kashmiri. Kachru (1969) used the term 'Sanskritized Kashmiri' for the code used by Hindu Kashmiris and 'Persianized Kashmiri' for the variant used by Muslim Kashmiris, because of the large number of lexical items from the respective languages. However, there are some variations between the two varieties at the lexical and phonological levels. Kachru recognises these variants as mere stylistic differences. However, Koul argues that the dichotomy of these social dialects is not always clear-cut, and the style switching of the speakers of these dialects is contextually bound between the participants of the two communities. Thus, it can be argued that the two ethnic dialects of the Kashmiri language have existed since the 14th century, when the mystic poet Lal Ded[7] recited her verses (*vakhs*), which included more Sanskritised lexical items than the verses (s*hruks*) of her contemporary, Muslim saint Sheikh Nor-u-Din, which consisted of a more Persianised lexicon.

As far as the regional dialects are concerned, they have been divided into three variants, mostly on a phonological basis. The southern dialect *Maraz* is spoken in the south and south-east regions of Islamabad (Anantanag). The variety spoken in central Kashmir (Srinagar and its adjacent areas) is *Yamraz.* Finally, the variant spoken in the north and the northwestern regions of Baramulla is *Kamraz.* All codes share almost the same lexicon, and the lexical items have the same root. The only variation is that some lexical items vary in phonological features. It is interesting to note that both types of variants, that is, the regional and the social dialects, are mutually intelligible. Lawrence has also observed the variation in

spoken Kashmiri, though he has not used the term 'dialect' for any variant. He highlights that "in villages, real Kashmiri is spoken, and village heads and other persons of position can converse in Urdu, while the ordinary peasant will speak Kashmiri" (455). The author, being a native speaker of Kashmiri, observes that there are minute differences in the sociolinguistic features of the varieties of Kashmiri spoken by rural versus urban and literate versus illiterate speakers of the different regions. While speaking Kashmiri, literate people, in particular, make use of Urduised features at the phonological, morphological, and lexical levels.

Based on census reports and studies, including Grierson (1919) and Kachru (1969), it has been observed that the following five regional dialects of Kashmiri are spoken outside the valley: Kashtawari, Poguli, Rambani, Siraji, and Kohistani. Among them, Rambani and Siraji are closely related dialects, and they do not share any distinctive linguistic characteristics with Kashmiri, though they share some features with Kashmiri, such as semantic dimensions of the pronominal system, some morphology, and a substantial portion of their vocabulary (mostly borrowed from common sources). However, they also share some features with Dogri and other Pahari languages. The term 'Kohistani', recounts O. Koul, has no precise linguistic significance. It probably refers to languages of the Shina group. Thus, he does not recognise Kohistani as a dialect of Kashmiri. Furthermore, he treats Kashtawari and Poguli as the only two regional dialects of Kashmiri that are spoken outside Kashmir. "Poguli, spoken in the Pogul and Paristan valleys of the south, south-east, and south-west of Banihal, shares many linguistic features with Kashmiri, including 70% of its vocabulary", asserts Koul (8). Kashtawari is spoken in the Koshtawar Valley, lying to the southeast of Kashmir. Kashtawari, according to Grierson, is the "one true dialect" (233) of Kashmiri. In Koul's observation, Kashtawari shares 80% of its vocabulary and most of its linguistic features with standard Kashmiri.

Nonetheless, comprehensive, linguistically-oriented, dialect research has not been conducted to study the different speech variations of Kashmiri, as spoken by different communities and people who belong to different professions and occupations. Hence, dialect research needs further attention.

### 2.3.2. Script Uncertainty

During the ninth century, Kashmir was a great seat of learning with respect to Sanskrit and philosophy. Sarwari discusses that during Asoka's era, Buddhism came to the valley of Kashmir, and Buddhist scholars published books in Sanskrit instead of in their own language, Pali[8]. It is

believed that the Fourth Buddhist Council was held in Kashmir around AD 100, and all the proceedings were written in Sanskrit, in addition to Pali. During that period, Sanskrit was written in *Brahmi* script. At the same time, Kashmiri scholars started writing Sanskrit in another script, 'Sharda'. All the old Sanskrit books written in Kashmir during that period are in Sharda[9] script itself. In its early stages of development, Kashmiri did not have any written form; therefore, for writing purposes, the Hindus used Sanskrit (in Sharda script) and the Muslims used Persian (in Perso-Arabic script). However, in 1468, Saltan Zain-ul-Abdeen, who was acquainted with Kashmiri, Sanskrit, and Persian, wrote a poem in Kashmiri to Mahmood Shah Khalji, the king of Malwa, in Perso-Arabic script.

Although mutually intelligible, there are dialect-related variations of the Kashmiri language; similarly, there is a miscellany or what Kachru calls "an agony of multiple systems of writing" (22), when the history of the scripts of the Kashmiri language is reviewed. Sharda, Devanagari, Perso-Arabic, [10] and Roman are the scripts that have been employed for the Kashmiri language from time to time, which illustrates the 'script uncertainty' of the language. According to Kachru, "Sharda script, traced back to *Brahmi* (third century), was exclusively used by the pandits of Kashmir; it closely resembles Nagari script and is now almost extinct, preserved mainly in manuscripts and horoscopes" (25). Sharda (used for writing Sanskrit) is considered the oldest script that has been adopted to write Kashmiri. Sharda script, opines O. Koul, "has been derived from Brahmi script and developed around the tenth century" (165). Nevertheless, similar to the other scripts adopted for Kashmiri, it does not represent all the phonetic features of the Kashmiri language because there are several sounds in Kashmiri that are not found in Hindi or in any other language of the Indo-Aryan family. The Devanagari script is used in some journals, such as *Koshur Samachar*, *Aalav*, and *Kashir Bhawni Times*, which are all published outside Kashmir by the Kashmiri Hindu community. Analogous to Sharda, Devanagari also does not represent all the phonetic characteristics of the Kashmiri language. Actually, the written system of Kashmiri could not be established for a long time. Thus, in the Kashmiri speech community, to overcome this situation and to fill the gap of writing, other languages dominated the written discourse. The Muslim rulers, recounts A. Koul, made many efforts to make the Persian language and its literature popular with educated people. It has been observed that instead of writing in their mother tongue, Kashmiri creative writers thought it a matter of great honour, pride, and dignity to write in Persian. Based on historical evidence, it is claimed that writing in Kashmiri came to a halt and lost its essence, and thus, for writing purposes, Persian and

Urdu replaced it subsequently, because of the prestige associated with these two languages.

Lawrence has also expressed serious apprehensions about the written form of Kashmiri. According to him, *Koshur*, the language of Kashmiris, was formerly written in Sharda characters. He further presumes that "there are doubts, however, as to whether it was ever written, and at present, anyone who wishes to write in *Kashur* language employs Persian, to which certain sibilants not known in Persian have to be added" (454). Although Kashmiri has been written in Sharda, Devanagari, Roman and Perso-Arabic scripts, there are doubts about whether Kashmiri had any original script of its own. For instance, according to J. L. Kaul, Kashmiri does not have its own original alphabet, and it is wrong to say that Sharda was the script for Kashmiri; rather, it was the script for writing Sanskrit. Expressing his apprehensions, he asserts that "nor was the Perso-Arabic script ever adapted to Kashmiri so as to enable it to express, more or less adequately, the sounds peculiar to our language" (88).

O. Koul rightly emphasises that scripts tend to become markers of identity. For Koul, the writing system is "not only the mode of communicating visually, but it also has social value attached to it. A writing system and script employed for it, serves as an identity symbol" (164). Just as there are differences in the varieties of Kashmiri spoken by different ethnic communities, these different communities have adopted different scripts for written Kashmiri discourse, though the written form of Kashmiri is not well-recognised. Muslim Kashmiris mostly employ Perso-Arabic script and Hindu Kashmiris use Devanagari script to write Kashmiri. Devanagari has been employed mostly in some anthologies and in religious texts related to Hindus. Perso-Arabic script, with several modifications, has been adopted as the official script of the language by the state government. All the textbooks published by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages and by the Department of Information (Jammu and Kashmir Government) use Perso-Arabic script. More recently, a weekly newspaper, *Sangarmaal*, and a daily, *Koushur Akhbar* (the first online newspaper in Kashmiri), published from Srinagar, also adopted Perso-Arabic script. Among the other Indian languages, Perso-Arabic script is used for Urdu and Sindhi and is written from right to left. The version of Perso-Arabic script used for Kashmiri is different, in a sense, from the other two languages that employ it; because of some unusual sounds, Kashmiri utilises more diacritic marks.

Among the other scripts, Roman is also used for Kashmiri. Roman script, explicates Kachru, was used by the Baptist missionaries of Serampore in Bengal to publish Kashmiri versions of the New Testament

(1821), and selected parts of the Old Testament (1827, 1832). Roman script, as argued by many, is considered the ideal script for Kashmiri, and this argument has its merits. Every literate person in the community already knows the script, irrespective of geographic location and religious beliefs. Recently, some young thinkers of Kashmir initiated a movement in favour of employing Roman script for Kashmiri; however, some Kashmiri scholars, writers, and thinkers who feel a strong affiliation and identity linkage with Perso-Arabic script opposed this move. However, in Chatterji's view, this script would have been "the most reasonable and practical thing" (77) for the Kashmiri language. Kashmiri scholars in favour of Perso-Arabic script argue that it has been the accepted script for centuries, employed by both communities. Rashid quotes the proposal of the noted Kashmiri scholar and Jnanpith awardee Rehman Rahi, "The modern Kashmiri script is Perso-Arabic. It is a standard accepted by people for six hundred years. Most writings, whether by Muslim writers or Hindu writers, in the last six or seven centuries, has been Perso-Arabic. But people are free to use different scripts according to their requirement" (*The Indian Express*).

In fact, the Kashmiri language has always been a binding force between the two communities; however, there are apprehensions that its script might play a divisive role. Witnessing the distribution of literature at the (local) annual (2009) *Khir Bhawani Mela* at the Tullamula temple in Srinagar, Toufiq Rashid argued that the Kashmir Valley is being divided on religious lines, following the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits. He further argues that the Kashmiri language, which used to be a binding factor between the Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits, is being used for this divisive policy.

He further contends that Kashmiri Pandit organisations are promoting the language among their youth using Devanagari script. The reason: the young generation of Pandits born outside Kashmir has no knowledge of Perso-Arabic script, which has been the accepted form of writing among Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir for centuries. During the *Khir Bhawani Mela*, a Hindu festival, most of the organisations were distributing literature in Devanagari. Rashid quotes Shailender Dhar of Satisar Foundation (a non-profit organisation formed eight years ago in Jammu): "We are concerned with the people who form our audience. That is why we use Devanagari. They can't read any other script" (*The Indian Express*). Rashid further expresses that even the weekly and fortnightly classes held by the organisation to promote Kashmiri culture among the youth, are in Devanagari. However, members of such organisations defend their position and assert that they are not creating a divide between the two

communities; rather, they are just trying to promote the dying Kashmiri Pandit culture. They also claim that their aim is to preserve and promote the age-old values of the Kashmiri Hindu cultural tradition, which includes language, philosophy, art and literature, history, sciences, and the spiritual tradition. They clearly assert that they are not against any script but are just trying to revive their old roots. However, Rahi finds this a bit problematic for the people who want to know about the composite culture of the Kashmir Valley, as their choice will be limited. Rashid quotes Rahi, "how will they read the rich Kashmiri literature written by both Hindu and Muslim writers?" He further argues that "when one changes the script, the language changes. This will never allow the young generation to know their composite roots".

Nevertheless, Kak is of a different opinion concerning the scripts used to write Kashmiri. Kak illustrates that Muslim and Hindu Kashmiris presently view the script, the origin of Kashmiris with a bias based on the religion they belong to, and the ideology they nurture. Kashmiri Hindus, who have migrated from Kashmir, now desist from using Perso-Arabic script and have adopted Devanagari script to write Kashmiri. This particular Kashmiri group, conjunctures Kak, now increasingly tries to highlight an affinity between Kashmiri and the Indo-Aryan language family, thereby showing a close link with Sanskrit. Nonetheless, Kashmiri Muslims, who live mostly in Kashmir, support the Dardic ancestry of the language (simply to distance from Sanskrit) and Perso-Arabic script. According to Kak, this controversy of the Kashmiri script and its ancestry "has become an ideological controversy and is no longer a linguistic issue" (52). More or less similar apprehensions are expressed by Kachru in what he calls 'the agony of scripts'. Kachru opines that "in the choice of a script and in the maintenance and promotion of it to write Kashmiri, political ideology and religious identities have played an important role" (25). In other words, Kashmiri carries the uncertainty of not having its own alphabet because of certain religious, political, and historical ideologies and biases. In the future, this may create differences between the two communities and may defame the centuries-old binding force, the root of *Kashmiryat*, and its pluralistic values—the Kashmiri language itself. This script issue of Kashmiri has led to digraphia—the use of two different scripts for a single language, due to social and political reasons.

### 2.3.3. Literary Discourses

According to Chatterjee, the history of Kashmiri literature, like that of the language, can be divided into three periods, which parallels most of the other languages of India (Aryan and Dravidian):

I. Old Kashmiri, from AD 1200 to 1500
II. Middle Kashmiri, from AD 1500 to 1800
III. New or Modern Kashmiri, AD 1800 onwards

It is generally believed that during the Hindu period in Kashmir, which lasted up to AD 1337, Sanskrit used to be the language for literary discourses, which was gradually replaced by Persian, during Muslim rule in Kashmir. It is interesting to note that Kashmiri has been much influenced by languages such as Sanskrit and Persian. Until the 13th century, Kashmiri encountered Sanskrit, followed by Persian, from AD 1307 to 1855. The influence of the Persian language on Kashmir was such that Kashmir was once called *Iran-e-Sageer,* meaning 'small Iran'. Persian was perceived as the language of the educated elite and was declared the state's official language[10] during the era of Sultan-Zain-ul-Abdeen (popularly known as 'Budshah'). This was the time when Persian replaced Sanskrit as the language of the courts and began use in education and administration. Being a Persian poet himself, the Sultan encouraged the use of Persian in Kashmir by rewarding some of the Persian authors and by translating some Sanskrit works into Persian. During the Sultan's rule, Mullah Ahmad translated Rajtarangini, a historical manuscript about Kashmir, and the famous religious scripture *Mahabharata* from Sanskrit to Persian. The Dogra Art Gallery in Jammu has preserved the old Persian handwritten manuscripts of *Shahnama* and *Sikendernama*.

Because of the predominant use of Persian and due to the Kashmiri-Persian language contact situation, Kashmiri has been influenced by it at various levels. Consequently, Persian lexical items entered the language of daily communication and literary discourse to a considerable extent. Despite the fact that Lal Ded had sometimes used a considerable number of Persian words in her poetry, Persian had not achieved any remarkable progress in her time. This shows the existence of Persian words in the everyday language of that period in Kashmir. Lal Ded used the language of the masses in her. Her *vakhs* or sayings are in colloquial Kashmiri, the language of the masses, rather than in the variety of language used by the scholars and writers of that era. The language of 14th century Kashmir, as used in her *vakhs,* was of the Indo-Aryan sub-stock of languages. The language of Lal's *vakhs* is an example of what can be

called the proto-Kashmiri form of language. Kashmiri words of Sanskrit and Pali origin had undergone many phonological and morphological changes until the time of Lal Ded. Her *vakhs* were transmitted orally from generation to generation; therefore, these *vakhs* have undergone several linguistic changes. The great Sufi saint, Sheikh Noor-ud-Deen Noorani (AD 1378–1439), popularly known as Nund Rishi, also wrote in Kashmiri. His writings, particularly his short poems, which are usually about his own inner spiritual struggles, are known as *shruks*, and are typically a mixture of Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic[11]. Since he came after Lal Ded, his *shruks* or sayings are believed to resemble modern Kashmiri more than Lal Ded's *vakhs* do, and are more understandable. In the 16th century, a remarkable, and perhaps the most popular poet of Kashmiri, Habba Khotun (also called Zoon), made her way into the history of Kashmiri literature. She had some education in Persian and could compose popular lyrics in Kashmiri, known as *lol* (songs of yearning). Her place as a writer of exquisite lyrics about love and life is in the forefront of Kashmiri literature. The third important poet was the Arani-mal of the second half of the 18th century. Hence, in Kashmiri literature, the works of the three eminent poetesses (Lal Ded of the 14th century, Habba Khotun of the 16th century, and Arani-mal of the second half of the 18th century) and of Sheikh Noor-ud-Deen Noorani represent the important milestones of the Kashmiri literary tradition. Considering the literary contribution of these significant women, it can be argued that the Kashmiri literary tradition has been nurtured by the voices of women poets.

During the Sikh rule, Waliullah Matto wrote the famous Kashmiri folk tale *Heemal*. Similarly, Maqbool Kralwari wrote *Greeis Nama* and *Peer Nama*, the first experiments in writing prose in the colloquial language. One of his significant writings includes *Gulraiz*, which is still being appreciated. Moreover, Mahmood Gami, Rusul Mir, Wahab Khar, Swami Parmanand, G. A. Mahjoor, Ahad Zarger, Sochkral, Shah Gaffur, Nayama Sabh, Rahman Dar, Shams Faqir, Samad Mir, Rehman Rahi[12], Dena Nath Nadim, Amin Kamil, Master Zinda Koul, Margoob Banhali, Nazki, and G. N. Khayal are famous and representative figures of Kashmiri poetry (including mystic poetry).

As far as the art of writing prose in Kashmiri is concerned, due to certain uneven and unfavourable circumstances, it was delayed initially. This endeavour started as late as AD 1821, when a portion of the Bible was translated into Kashmiri. The post-1947 activity of writing prose in Kashmiri expanded widely, and various genres of prose such as short stories, novels, critical essays, and biographies received conscious, purposeful, and prominent attention. Some works from the Badshah's

period (AD 1420–1470) are even mentioned in different historical scriptures; however, only one book from that period, the *Banasarvad Katha*, has been known. The book is written by Avtar Bhat of Lar (Gandarbal, near Srinagar) and is in the form of poetry. It is interesting to note that the language used in this book is more complex and Sanskritised than that of the *vakhs* of Lal Ded and the s*hruks* of Sheikh Noor-ud-Deen. Mohidin Hajni's drama *Greis Sund Gur* (The Farmer's Horse) was a new initiative in prose that laid the foundation of a new tradition. During the same time, Sri Pratap College, Srinagar, started publishing a Kashmiri version of the college magazine. Amin Majhoor, son of the famous poet Majhoor, started publishing *Gaash* (Light), Kashmir's first newspaper; however, it was stopped shortly after. Following it, two weekly newspapers were launched: Ghulam Nabi Khayal's *Wataan* (Nation) and the Kashmir Cultural Organisation's *Koshur Akhbar* (Kashmiri Newspaper). Nevertheless, both were discontinued after a short time, because of some economic factors and low readership in Kashmiri. The first standard cultural magazine in Kashmiri, *Kong Posh* (The Saffron Flower), was published only after the formation of the National Cultural Front in 1947. Its publications included Dina Nath Nadim's first and famous Kashmiri story *Jawabe Card* (Answered Card or Response Letter). Regarding fiction, it would not be an exaggeration to conclude that Kashmiri is deficient in fictional works and novels. Only a few novels like Akhtar's *Doud Dag* (Sick and Pain, 1963), Gauhar's *Mujrim* (Criminal, 1969), and Amin Kamil's *Gatte Manz Gaash* (Light in Darkness) can be considered remarkable works in Kashmiri. The notable translations of foreign novels to Kashmiri include Maxim Gorky's '*Mother*' by A. M. Lone, Prem Chand's '*Godan*' by Roshan, and Tagore's '*Chokher Bali*' by Prof. P. N. Pushp. Subsequently, the renowned Mirwaiz Kashmir Molvi, Yousssf Shah, did a remarkable job of translating the Holy Quran into Kashmiri. Recently (2009), a Saudi Arabia-based website, www.al-fajar.com, has uploaded the translation and commentary of the Quran in Kashmiri on their website. Late Mufti Syed Ziaulhaq Bukhari has authored its Kashmiri translation. Later, Mahatma Gandhi's famous autobiography, '*My Experiments with Truth*', was translated into Kashmiri, entitled *Pazer Gorum*. It can thus be concluded that literary discourses in Kashmir have not flourished as significantly as it should have. There are several reasons for this, including socio-economic factors, low readership practices of Kashmiri, lack of accessibility, and the dominance of Urdu literary material.

## 2.4. Urdu in Kashmir: Issues and Perspectives

Urdu, according to the *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (2008) is:

> "A member of the Indo-Aryan group of languages within the Indo-European language family. Urdu is spoken by more than a 100 million people, predominantly in Pakistan and India. It is the official state language of Pakistan and is also officially recognised or 'scheduled' in the constitution of India. Significant speech communities exist in the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States as well. Notably, Urdu and Hindi are mutually intelligible. Urdu developed in the 12th century from the regional *Apabhramsha* of northwestern India, serving as a linguistic modus vivendi after the Muslim conquest. Its first major poet was Amir Khosrow (1253–1325), who composed *dohas* (couplets), folksongs, and riddles in the newly-formed speech, then called *Hindvi*. This mixed speech was variously called *Hindvi, Zaban-e-Hind, Hindi, Zaban-e-Delhi, Rekhta, Gujari, Dakkhani, Zaban-e-Urdu-e-Mualla, Zaban-e-Urdu*, or just *Urdu*, literally, 'the language of the camp'. Major Urdu writers continued to refer to it as *Hindi* or *Hindvi* until the beginning of the 19th century, although there is evidence that it was called *Hindustani* in the late 17th century (Hindustani now refers to a simplified speech form that is India's largest lingua franca).Urdu is closely related to Hindi, a language that originated and developed in the Indian subcontinent."

Urdu, the mother tongue of sixty million Indians (2001 census), and the national language of Pakistan, as well as an identity symbol for Indian Muslims, is associated with Islam and with Muslims in South Asia. This association is a result of British colonial rule that replaced Persian, the official language of Mughal rule, with Urdu at the lower level and English at the higher level, particularly in north India. Urdu is perceived as the major unifying force at the level of the subcontinent. Urdu is also one of the languages recognised in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India (1950). As far as the religious and linguistic significance of Islam is concerned, Urdu is not as sacred as Arabic, though it has a number of Arabic loanwords. Although it has borrowed a large number of lexical items from Persian and some from Turkish, it is a derivative of *Hindvi* (also called 'early Urdu'), the parent of both modern Hindi and Urdu. It originated as a new, common language of Delhi, which has been called *Hindavi* or *Dahlavi* by Amir Khusrau[13]. After the advent of the Mughals on the stage of Indian history, the *Hindavi* language enjoyed greater space and acceptance. Persian words and phrases came into vogue. The *Hindavi* of that period was known as *Rekhta*, or Hindustani, and only later as Urdu[14]. Perfect amity and tolerance between Hindus and Muslims tended to foster *Rekhta* or Urdu, which represented the principle of unity in

diversity, thus marking a feature of Indian life at its best. The ordinary spoken version ('bazaar Urdu') was almost identical to the popularly spoken version of Hindi. Most prominent scholars in India hold the view that Urdu is neither a Muslim nor a Hindu language; it is an outcome of a multicultural and multi-religious encounter.

Urdu and Hindi, according to *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (2008), share the same Indic base and are so similar in phonology and grammar that they appear to be one language. In terms of lexicon, however, they have borrowed extensively from different sources—Urdu from Arabic and Persian, Hindi from Sanskrit—so they are usually treated as independent languages. Their distinction is most marked in terms of their writing systems: Urdu uses a modified form of Perso-Arabic script, while Hindi uses Devanagari script. Phonologically, Urdu sounds are the same as those of Hindi except for slight variations in short vowel allophones. Urdu also retains a complete set of aspirated stops (sounds pronounced with a sudden release with an audible breath), a characteristic of Indo-Aryan, as well as retroflex stops. Urdu does not retain the complete range of Perso-Arabic consonants, despite its heavy borrowing from that tradition. From a grammatical point of view, there is not much difference between Hindi and Urdu.

With the advent of Islam and Muslims in the Kashmir Valley, Turkish, Arabic, and Persian came along with it, but the presence of Urdu in Kashmir has a unique historical background. Unlike other non-native languages, it did not come along with the inhabitants who spoke it. Urdu and its associated culture encountered Kashmir differently, compared to other languages such as Persian. In addition to other factors, religious affinity was one of the significant factors that allowed the introduction and acceptance of Urdu into the Kashmiri speech community without any resistance. During the middle of the 18$^{th}$ century, there was an enormous increase in religious writings in Urdu. Urdu emerged as a language of Islamic revivalism. A journalist from Delhi, Maulana Maududi (1903-1979), mostly wrote about Islam in an accessible version of Urdu. He wrote in easily comprehensible Urdu rather than in the Arabic-laden jargon of the *molvis*. His writings were the initial religious literary discourse that arrived in Kashmir, and they influenced people deeply. Further, Urdu was a link language between Maharaja Pratap Singh and the Britishers. He recognised Urdu as the official language of the state in 1889. It is surprising to remark that during the reorganisation of Indian states in 1956 on a linguistic basis, Urdu was not recognised as the official language of any state. Even in what Farouqui calls "its homeland—the so-called Hindi belt of north India" (2), it continued to be the official

language of Kashmir, which is ironically the only state in India where a non-native language is the official language.

The language contact situation of Urdu in Kashmir and in other parts of India is contrary. The greatest tragedy Urdu faced in India was when the country was divided in 1947, and Pakistan declared Urdu its national language. This restricted the flourishing of Urdu in India, because it was presumed that Urdu is the language of Muslims. Second, in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India, recognition was conferred on the regional languages and dialects spoken in the country, which aroused linguistic consciousness everywhere and led to prejudice against Urdu in non-Urdu-speaking areas. Farouqui's discussion shows how, in India, Urdu has become largely confined to the Muslim minority educational institutions and *madrassas* (Muslim religious schools), which primarily accommodate backward and poor Muslims. Thus, it has only survived among the lower strata of the Muslim community in India. However, in Kashmir, Urdu is associated with social prestige and is perceived as a means of upward economic and social mobility. In north India, Urdu and modernity were first perceived by Muslim culture and identity as social forces to be reckoned with. Nevertheless, Kashmir presents a different picture; there, it was promoted by the socio-economically upper sections of society, and the Muslim middle class adopted it as a path and tool for socio-economic mobility and growth and as a symbol of prestige. During the initial stages of the influence of Urdu in Kashmir, the educated upper middle class who could afford to send their children to Urdu-medium educational institutes and could talk to their children in Urdu even at home embraced it.

In language contact situations, there is always interference from the first language (L1) when learning/speaking the second language (L2). An analogous situation appears in the Kashmiri-Urdu language contact situation. Because of the interference of the mother tongue (L1), the pronunciation, accent, and intonation of some Kashmiris speaking Urdu (L2) do not equate with the Urdu-speaking people of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and other Urdu-speaking zones. Even highly qualified people in the state who have learnt Urdu as a second language make mistakes while speaking Urdu.

### 2.4.1. Acceptance Factors

The question to be asked is how Urdu became the official language of the diverse, plural, multicultural, and multi-religious state of Kashmir. It is an implicit fact that for Pakistan, Urdu is a symbol of Islamic identity and

is somehow linguistically similar to Punjabi, Pahari, and Dogri; hence, the people of these geolinguistic expanses accepted Urdu easily. However, Urdu is structurally and linguistically different from Kashmiri. Despite this, there was no resistance against Urdu, and it was easily endorsed by the state's masses. As a matter of fact, there could be many social, political, cultural, and religious factors underlying the recognition and acceptance of Urdu in Kashmir as a language of the masses and as an official language. Among the significant explanations, the ones that Sarwari also acknowledges as responsible for the growth and recognition of Urdu in Kashmir are as follows.

Persian existed in Kashmir for a long time; consequently, it had an immense impact on the socio-cultural psyche of the people. Following the downfall of Mughal rule in Kashmir, Persian started losing its essence, which created a vacuum, of sorts, in the literary and socio-cultural life of the state. Urdu was perceived as the only language that could fill this linguistic-cultural vacuum, because of its cultural and linguistic proximity to Persian. During the regime of the Dogra rulers Gulab Singh and Ranbir Singh, Persian served as the state's official language. However, in 1889, Maharaja Pratap Singh declared Urdu the state's official language. This was the golden period for the growth and establishment of Urdu, as it was already flourishing in other parts of India with greater acceptance. By the time Urdu got official recognition, its usage had already been extended to schools, offices, and courts of the state.

The second important aspect is that from cultural and religious perspectives, Persian was perceived to be more closely associated with the Muslim-dominated population. It served as the medium of religious awareness and moral education, thus gaining significant recognition among Kashmiris. Despite the strong Kashmiri-Persian language contact situation and the long-term presence of Persian-speaking people in Kashmir, Persian could not replace the mother tongue (Kashmiri) of Kashmiris. When Persian started fading from the linguistic scene, Urdu was the only considerable, existing, culturally and religiously close language the people could imagine. Urdu encountered Kashmir with religious sentiments—a sufficient amount of literature (including religious literature) was published in Urdu. Urdu started establishing its presence in *madrassas* and *maktabs*, replacing Persian, since very few people in Kashmir were able to read/understand Arabic anyway. Thus, Urdu translations and interpretations of the Holy Koran, *Islami Fikha* (Islamic jurisprudence or Islamic law extracted from detailed Islamic sources), and other important Islamic literature, which had not reached Kashmiris earlier, proved to be a first-hand source of religious discourse and Islamic

law, which they could now easily understand. This practice succeeded in associating a sense of religious sentiment with Urdu, which proved to be conducive to its acceptance and establishment.

The third explanation is that some Kashmiris started travelling to other parts of India and adopted Urdu as a link language. From revenue offices to legislature, the language made its way to almost every important sphere of life including educational, literary, media, religious, and cultural discourse. Moreover, most administrative officers of that period, who had arrived from outside the state, were excellent Urdu scholars and writers. They started interacting with the masses in Urdu, which had a great influence on the latter. Interestingly, Urdu is still used in revenue records, the judiciary, *Nikah Namah*[15] or marriage agreement, invitation cards, police records, businesses, and journalism. The Urdu press is flourishing in Kashmir. Urdu maintained the order of formal discourse in administration and government meetings. The courts and legislature use Urdu for the pleading and proceedings of cases.

The fourth rationale for why Urdu attained a stronghold is that the language imparted a sense of political consciousness among the masses. It became the voice of the common people, expressed through the various newspapers of that time. Urdu papers were cheaper, almost one paisa per copy. Sheikh Abdullah—an important political figure, and the then Prime Minister, and later Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir—employed Urdu poetry to create socio-cultural and political awareness among the masses. He opened a library in June 1931 and subscribed to several Urdu newspapers, journals, periodicals, and other literary publications.

In 1940, Molvi Abdul Haq, a renowned Urdu scholar, visited Jammu and gave an exciting speech in favour of Urdu, which resulted in the establishment of the first branch of *Anjuman Tahreeki Urdu* (Hind), 'organisation for the support of Urdu', in Jammu and Kashmir. In the same year, the government asked the then Chairman of Education, Khwaja Ghulam Syideen, to compile a linguistic report on the state's education system. In the report, he acknowledged that:

> Urdu is the medium of education from first to M.A. It is true that Urdu is not the native language of most Kashmiris, but it is close to Dogri, Ladakhi, and Punjabi and to some extent, also resembles Pahari and Gojri. Therefore, it should not be a problem even for those students who do not know the Urdu language (Sarwari 2:25).

In the same year, the government implemented *Aasan Urdu* or 'Easy Urdu', taught in Nagri and Persian scripts in government schools. The

objective of this was to use them as a unifying force and conciliation factor for both Urdu and Hindi speakers.

Sarwari notes that on January 8, 1941, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah said in a public speech that his party (the National Conference) believed that "Urdu is the language that has been adopted by the people of the state. It fulfills our educational and constitutional needs, and in the years ahead, this language is capable of helping the growth and development of the people" (2:27). Hence, the National Conference decided to continue with Urdu as the state's official language. However, post 1947; Kashmiris felt the threat to their national and linguistic identity. To preserve their distinct identity, they took up the Kashmiri language. Nevertheless, Urdu had already become significant in the linguistic space of Kashmir, and it was established as the language of trade, judiciary, revenue, and media discourse. The National Conference, the major political party of that period, which, presumably, was to rule the state after 1947, raised the slogan *Nayaa Kashmir* or 'new Kashmir' in their manifesto, promising that Urdu would continue to be the state's official language. This historical document of the National Conference, *Nayaa Kashmir: Seyasi Aayeen aur Aktisadi Mansooba* ('New Kashmir: Constitutional and Political Manifesto'), was based on fifty articles concerning issues of the management of the state; law and order; and, political, socio-cultural, and economic development of the state. Article 28 dealt with the development and improvement of the literature and languages of the state. It emphasised that the national languages of the state were to be Kashmiri, Dogri, Dardi, Baltistani, Punjabi, Urdu, and Hindi. Urdu was assigned the status of an 'international language' in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. This encouragement on the political front proved to be significant in the maintenance of Urdu.

The fifth reason is the role of religious discourses. Religious movements also played a considerable role in the growth and development of Urdu in Kashmir. Muslim and Christian missionaries both used Urdu as a tool to achieve their goals. In this context, *madrassa* education played an essential role in the promotion of Urdu, as *madrassas* wholly employed Urdu as the medium of education and instruction. Similarly, Christian missionaries also began Urdu medium schools, though their aim was the propagation of the English language and of Christianity. Swami Dyanand's Arya Samaj movement used Urdu as a medium to popularise the movement. Urdu also enjoyed support from the written works and poetry of several famous individuals in the subcontinent, such as Mirza Ghalib, Alama Iqbal, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, and Mir Taki Mir. Their writings deeply influenced the psyche of Kashmiris. Urdu was flourishing in other

parts of India too; Urdu patriotic poetry and writings played a significant role in India's freedom movement from the British. The language acted as a unifying force among the people of different faiths and cultures. This created an accommodating environment for the maintenance of Urdu in the Kashmir Valley.

The sixth significant factor in the assertion of Urdu as the state's official language could be its nonaligned status as compared to other languages spoken in the state. For instance, had the Maharaja or the succeeding regimes introduced Ladakhi, Dogri, or Kashmiri as the state's official language, every other group might have objected to it. However, since Urdu was nobody's mother tongue, it was the only and best available neutral alternative to unite the people of different geolinguistic zones, who spoke diverse mother tongues and had different cultures and faiths. Although the Maharaja himself was a native speaker of Dogri, he could not make it the state's official language, as he was aware of the prestige and power of Urdu and of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the state. Thus, Urdu was easily incorporated into the repertoire of the people. Keeping the diverse nature of the state in mind, Urdu was given the status of a link and of the state's official language. Besides this, people from all three regions—Kashmir, Jammu, and Ladakh—were conversant in Urdu and felt closer to it. Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims had been writing and speaking Persian since the era of the Shahmiri Sultans. The similarity in script, alphabet, and grammar, and a great treasure of vocabulary that had been absorbed into Urdu made it more acceptable to the Dogra rulers than the Punjabi or Dogri languages. Therefore, the state's practical association with Urdu became imperative.

The seventh and final explanation addresses why Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the successive regimes, and the Indian State continued with Urdu as the official language even after 1956, when the linguistic reorganisation of the Indian states was done). The most probable reason is that it was already been accepted by the people of the three major regions of the state and had made considerable space in the psyche of the masses. Moreover, its link to the religious sentiments of the Muslim majority of Kashmir was strong enough for its maintenance. Thus, had the then Government replaced it with Kashmiri; the people of the other two regions may not have easily accepted this decision. Similarly, had they introduced Dogri and Ladakhi or Pahari, these languages may not have been accepted by the Muslim majority of Kashmir-speaking people and/or the people of other regions. Moreover, Urdu was the only language that was able to operate as a lingua franca with the other regions of the state, country, and subcontinent.

Additional reasons for the maintenance of Urdu in Kashmir could be related to the two-decade- old separatist movement, which also played a significant role in the sustenance of Urdu in at least two ways. The first was that those actively involved in the separatist movement typically used Urdu in their speeches, press conferences, posters, pamphlets, and slogans. The second was that the onset of the separatist movement brought almost six lakh security forces to Kashmir, who primarily communicated with the masses in Hindi/Hindustani, which is mutually intelligible with Urdu.

Further, many Imams (religious preachers), employed from the other parts of India, particularly from the North India, are well versed in Urdu. They employ a 'pure' Urdu lexicon for preaching and teaching Islam. This situation overtly or covertly supported the acceptance of Urdu in Kashmir, given the religious associations with the language.

Other possible reasons for the acceptance and maintenance of Urdu in Kashmir include the printing press, schooling system, government policies, semi-government agencies, NGOs, textbooks, political speeches, the separatist movement, pamphlets and other written discourse, and the media (print and electronic).

All the factors mentioned above played a prominent role in the growth and development of the Urdu language in Kashmir. Within the media, the most popular cable television network played a significant role. The much-celebrated, controversial family serials telecasted on different cable television channels, watched in remote areas, even by those womenfolk who cannot understand any language other than Kashmiri, and have never read a book or attend a school. Besides this, the songs sung and the language used in the world's second-largest film industry, Bollywood[16], played a crucial role in at least learning and conceptualising Urdu songs. Popular Urdu journalism and its extensive Urdu readership in Kashmir also favoured the growth of Urdu. Most of the people in the valley were able to read and write Urdu, which proved to be a great contributing factor in the enlargement of Urdu readership. Very few people were able to read or write Kashmiri, and the availability of literary material in Kashmiri was almost negligible.

Among other agencies of communication, the state's Information Department, Cultural Academy, Radio Kashmir Srinagar, Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar, the newly launched *DD-Kashir*, the Iqbal Institute, and the Urdu department of the University of Kashmir are in the forefront.

Thus, it can be concluded that the acceptance, growth, development, and maintenance of Urdu is an outcome of several social, cultural, attitudinal, literary, religious, and media related factors. All of these

contributed equally in the establishment of Urdu, which led to it being welcomed openheartedly and becoming the language of the masses.

## 2.5. Conclusion

Scholars are divided on the issue of the ancestors of Kashmiris. From time to time, they have given diverse opinions and theories regarding the origin of the people of Kashmir. Variedly, they have linked Kashmiri people's descent to Aryans, Pashachas and Nagas, and Israelis. Likewise, there are diverse opinions about the origin of the Kashmiri language and its genealogical classification. Most scholars classify it under the Dradic group. Further, it has been observed that out of every 100 Kashmiri words, 25 are from Sanskrit, 40 from Persian, 15 from Hindustani, and 10 from Arabic, and the remaining 10 are from the Tibetan, Turki, Dogri, and Punjabi languages.

As far as the dialects of Kashmiri are concerned, they have been distinguished as regional and ethnic dialects. Because of the use of a large number of lexical items adopted from Persian and Sanskrit, the ethnic dialects of Kashmiri have been named 'Sanskritised Kashmiri' for the code used by Hindu Kashmiris and 'Persianised Kashmiri' for the code used by Muslim Kashmiris. As far as regional dialects are concerned, they have been divided into three variants, based mostly on phonology. The southern dialect *Maraz* is spoken in the southern and south-eastern regions of Islamabad (Anantanag). The variety spoken in central Kashmir, including Srinagar and its adjacent areas, is *Yamraz*. Finally, the variant spoken in the northern and north-western region of Baramulla is *Kamraz*. All the codes share almost the same lexicon, and the lexical items have the same root. The only variation is that some lexical items vary in phonological features. It is interesting to note that both types of variants, that is, the regional and the social, are mutually intelligible.

In addition to the distinction in dialect, it has been observed that the following five regional varieties of Kashmiri are spoken outside the valley of Kashmir: Kashtawari, Poguli, Rambani, Siraji, and Kohistani. Among them, Rambani and Siraji are closely related and do not share any distinctive linguistic characteristics with Kashmiri, although they share some features with it, such as semantic dimensions of the pronominal system, some morphology, and a substantial portion of the vocabulary (mostly borrowed from common sources). Kashtawari and Poguli are the only two regional dialects of Kashmiri that are spoken outside the valley of Kashmir. Interestingly, literate people who speak Kashmiri use

Urduised, borrowed features at the phonological, morphological, and lexical levels.

The facts concerning the literary tradition and the uncertainty of scripts have greatly affected the Kashmiri language, as time has passed. Sharda (used to write Sanskrit) is presumed to be the oldest script adopted to write Kashmiri. Nevertheless, in addition to Sharda, Devanagari, Perso-Arabic, and Roman scripts have also been used for Kashmiri, from time to time. This clearly illustrates the 'script uncertainty' of the language. Perso-Arabic script has been recognised as the official script to write Kashmiri. In contemporary Kashmir, Muslim and Hindu Kashmiris view the script and origin of the Kashmiri language with different religious predispositions and ideologies, such that Muslims favour Perso-Arabic script, whereas Hindus prefer Devanagari script. This script controversy has led to 'digraphia' based intralingual identity conflict among the Kashmiri speech community—by employing the two different scripts (Perso-Arabic and Devanagari) for a common code, Kashmiri.

The concept of multiple scripts has led to many linguistic conflicts in various speech communities. Based on the sociolinguistic concept of 'diglossia'—where a single code has two different varieties—sociolinguists coined the term 'digraphia', which refers to a situation where for one language, two written forms co-exist simultaneously and in complementary distribution, based on the usage of two distinct graphical systems (scripts) by different communities. Songhay linguist, Petr Zima (1974), first used the term 'Digraphia' to describe the Hausa language having two writing systems: Boko (Latin alphabet) and Ajami script (Arabic alphabet). Later, it was used by sociolinguist R. H. Dale (1980) and by sinologist and lexicographer John DeFrancis (1984). It was followed by Hegyi, who coined and suggested the terms 'bigraphism' and 'multigraphism' for a language with two or more than two writing systems respectively. However, these terms could not sustain as 'digraphia' did. Digraphia has been divided into 'synchronic' and 'diachronic' digraphia, where the former refers to the coexistence of two or more writing systems for the same language, while the latter refers to the replacement of one writing system by another, for a particular language. Examples include the Konkani language (spoken along the western coast of India), which is written in Devanagari, Kannada, and Roman scripts. The more complex example of digraphia is Hindi-Urdu in India. The two scripts always had political and cultural implications, which left their mark on the language(s).

Historically, the Kashmiri language has been written in four scripts: Sharada, Devanagari, Perso-Arabic, and Roman. In contemporary

Kashmir, Muslim and Hindu Kashmiris view the script and origin of the Kashmiri language through their respective religious predispositions and ideologies. Muslims favor Perso-Arabic script, whereas Hindus prefer Devanagari script. This has had serious implications for the maintenance of the Kashmiri language and its associated Identity. The Kashmiri Muslim community has shifted to Urdu for most forms of discourse to explicate and assert pan-Islamic Muslim identity, and the Hindu diaspora community has moved to Hindi to reassert the association with the Indian state.

From an evolutionary perspective, the Kashmiri literary tradition has been divided into three stages: (i) Old Kashmiri, from AD 1200 to 1500, (ii) Middle Kashmiri, from AD 1500 to 1800; and, (iii) New or Modern Kashmiri, AD 1800 onwards. The mystic poet Lal Ded's *vakhs* and the great Sufi saint Sheikh Noor-ud-Deen Noorani's *shruks*, are considered pioneering literary contributions to the Kashmiri language.

There are several social, cultural, attitudinal, literary, religious, and media related factors that created a persuasive space for the acceptance and growth of the Urdu language in Kashmir, not only as the language of the masses but also as the state's official language, giving it recognition on the linguistic map of India. It must be emphasised that Kashmir is the only state of India where a non-native language (Urdu) represents the state on the map of official languages.

# CHAPTER THREE

# CHANGING LINGUISTIC PRACTICES: A FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Linguistic identity is an underlying assumption in studying the crucial functional perspective of language(s) employed by a speech community, which in turn consolidates it. It is legitimate to emphasise that linguistic identities, due to methodological constraints, cannot be studied in isolation from a functional perspective of the language(s) employed by a speech community. Thus, it is difficult to theorise the language-identity linkage separate from the functional aspects of a language. This chapter explores the dimensions of changing language roles, linguistic behaviour, and language practices of the Kashmiri speech community from a functional perspective, and in turn, investigates their impact on linguistic identities. Linguistic behaviour and the language roles and practices of a speech community cannot be examined without addressing the functional aspects of the language(s) used.

The usage of language varieties or codes varies according to the context and the primary group affiliation of the speaker with respect to certain crucial reference points such as class, region, religion, gender, age, socio-economic background, and education. Such reference points heavily shape speech such that speakers inevitably signal much about their social identity even when expressing common utterances. The essential dimensions of language variation are not only in patterns of use or in who the people are but also in situations in which they find themselves.

This chapter examines the usage of language(s) in different domains and contexts, including education, mainly, the medium of education and instruction. It investigates the knowledge of language(s) and the associated skills, and it simultaneously examines their correlation with different background characteristics such as age, gender, and type of schooling. Moreover, the present chapter investigates the actual language roles and usage of the speech community in the context of the home, across role relationships. It is being asserted that context plays a crucial role in the learning of languages. The home environment is considered a relatively

more suitable context for language acquisition. In the maintenance or shift of language, the home context promotes or impedes language maintenance. Changes in the language acquisition contexts of a language in a multilingual setting explicitly imply changing language roles of a speech community according to the prestige associated with a specific code. Thus, the chapter specifically studies the nature of changing acquisition contexts of spoken and written communication of the speech community. The language roles and a functional perspective of language usage illustrate that in practice, people use diverse codes for different requirements such as counting, thinking, storytelling, arguing, praying, kinship-calling, and dreaming. It reinforces the roles played by different codes for such functional aspects. Finally, the chapter analyses the two crucial functional aspects of language usage to explore the nature of interlingual diglossia between two different codes employed for the spoken and written forms. Before concluding, the chapter summarises the preference of people for the writing purposes, and the possible readership practices in the different language varieties. It concludes with the remark that in the Kashmiri speech community, the language roles are changing in favour of Urdu, and subsequently, the identity associated with it.

## 3.1. Patterns of Language Use in the Educational Milieu

Despite the great linguistic diversity of the world, educational systems have been dominated by what Garcia calls "the language of the elite" (405). Here, the elite can be with respect to economic, cultural, religious, or political background. The medium of instruction and of education are two foremost aspects, as far as the use of language in education is concerned. The use of a particular language as the medium of education and instruction depends mainly on the language-education policies of the state. In fact, educational medium can be employed as a strategy to aid the survival of a certain language.

It is significant to point out here that language is the fundamental resource or tool with which teachers and children work together in schools. Oral communication, where the medium of instruction plays a major role, is as important as written language in the processes of school learning. Oral language is responsible for the basic understanding of many things, including appropriate patterns of interaction in the classroom, and the knowledge, information, and ideas that schooling seeks to impart. Teachers and children constantly move between spoken and written language, often mediated by visual images of various kinds.

There are, in fact, many empirical studies concerning the factors affecting choice of medium of instruction in schools, as stated by Belinda Ho and Kwok Keung Ho (2004). Three factors—economic, political, and educational—have been identified as the basic causes, by Joseph Boyle (2000), Chih-Cheng Chiang (1995), and M. C. Kamanda (2002). The economic factor represents the economic value that can be obtained from using a language (mainly the language preference of potential employers and the need of the market). It usually manifests itself through parents' choice of schools for their children. The political factor is the state's language preference (which is the effect of the culture of the ruling elite) that manifests itself in the form of policies and future planning. The educational factor refers to the learning effectiveness of the students and the instructional effectiveness of the teachers, manifested in students' academic achievement and school life. According to UNESCO (1953), the mother tongue is the natural instrument of thought and communication and is usually the default choice of the educational factor.

As far as the medium of education in Kashmir is concerned, until the year 2000, English and Urdu served this purpose up to middle school, in schools run by the state government. However, prior to 2000, Urdu was the only medium of education. All textbooks, including those of social science, science, history, and mathematics, were in Urdu, written in Perso-Arabic script (excluding the English language textbooks). However, most private and missionary schools adopted English as the medium of education, before the year 2000. Nevertheless, they also taught the Urdu language with Urdu as the medium of instruction. In juxtaposition with that, schools owned by some Muslim organisations continued with Urdu as the medium of instruction and education even up to the year 2000. After 2000, there was a decline in parents choosing government schools to educate their children. In some neo-urban colonies, the number of teachers was higher than that of students, which forced the state's education department to combine multiple schools. In addition to the above factors, English, the dominant language of globalization, also influenced the state government to rethink its language-education policies. The medium of education for sixth grade onwards was changed to English for all textbooks, including social science, history, mathematics, and general knowledge, but not for Islamic studies (*Islameyat*) and Urdu. In 2005, five years after the implementation of the policy, the increasing reputation of English and the growing number of English medium schools further influenced the state government, so it decided to teach all the subjects in English in all government-sponsored schools, from first grade onwards.

Interestingly, Urdu continued to be the medium of instruction in all government and private schools.

In central schools, and in those managed by the Army, Urdu is the medium of instruction and education from early on. Since the central schools in the valley had some teachers and students from other Indian states as well, Urdu was the only lingua franca for communication in such schools. Because of its low popularity, usage, and demand among the Kashmiri speech community, government and private schools have not included the teaching of Hindi in their curricula. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that in addition to the Central and Army schools, some private schools also teach Hindi language. Possibly, for maintaining their identity, educational institutions run by different communities adopt and teach different languages based on the ideology each community wants to assert and keeping the cultural and religious aspects of the language in mind. For example, schools run by the Sikh community necessarily teach Punjabi in Gurumukhi script. Similarly, schools run by Muslim institutions teach Urdu and Arabic in Perso-Arabic script, though this is not a mandatory part of the state's language-education policy.

However, Kashmiri found its place in the school curriculum at the primary level from the year 2001. The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education even decided on its gradual introduction at other levels and claimed to have prepared Kashmiri books for the higher secondary level. Nevertheless, in its first phase, the government planned to introduce the teaching of Kashmiri as a subject in all government and private schools up to the primary level, and it executed a plan to train teachers towards this purpose. To demonstrate that the state is concerned with safeguarding the Kashmiri language, the Director, School Education, Kashmir, in 2006, asserted that Kashmiri would be included in the curricular scheme as a compulsory subject up to the secondary stage of schooling in all schools of the Kashmir Valley. However, this turned out to be a half-hearted, non-serious effort towards the state language-education policy; just a status planning exercise without any proper corpus planning strategy. The present study demonstrates that Urdu has attained more space as the medium of instruction not only in private schools but also in rural government schools, because of the prestige and popularity associated with Urdu and the support it enjoyed from the state, as discussed in the first chapter.

**Table 3-1 Medium of Education and Instruction at Different Levels of Education**

| Level of Education | Medium of Instruction (in percentage) | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri | Urdu | English | Urdu and English (mixed) | Percent | Number |
| Primary | 43.6 | 56.4 | - | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Middle | 25.5 | 74.5 | - | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| High School | 0.9 | 99.1 | - | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Higher Secondary | - | 9.6 | - | 90.4 | 100.0 | 94 |
| College | - | - | 60.2 | 39.8 | 100.0 | 83 |

Table 3-1 illustrates that 56.4% at the primary level, 74.5% at the middle level, and 99.1% at the high school level reported Urdu as the medium of instruction and education. At the higher secondary level, 90.4 % reported both Urdu and English as their instructional and educational mediums. This clearly signifies the dominance of Urdu as the medium of instruction among the Kashmiri speech community.

Age is considered an important sociolinguistic variable, and the relationship between age and language use is a crucial one, which has traditionally been analysed from two points of view: changes in language use during the lifespan of an individual (age-specific language use), and languages used by different cohorts living within a given speech community (generation-specific language use). This distinction has been an important one in the analysis of language change. According to William Labov (1994), individuals tend to preserve their speech pattern as they age. The study of generation-specific language necessarily involves the study of language change. Other related sociolinguistic studies like those of Peter Trudgill (1986), Suzanne Romaine (1989), J. Chambers (1992), and P. Kerswill (1996) stress the important role played by age in language change, shift, or maintenance. The present work also confirms a significant correlation by comparing respondents of different age groups with the medium of education and type of schooling. With reference to age, it was observed that the usage of Urdu as the medium of instruction and education increases from higher to lower age groups. Moreover, its usage is predominant in more private and urban schools vis-à-vis government and rural schools. This clearly indicates the escalating presence of Urdu in the educational sphere as the medium of instruction in

the Kashmiri speech community. Although English has recently taken over as the medium of education in first grade onwards in all educational institutions including government-run ones, Urdu continues to be the medium of instruction at an even larger extent than before. In fact, the medium of education is a matter of state policy rather than group ideology, whereas the medium of instruction reflects the status/attitudes towards a particular code/variety by a particular speech community.

Paradoxical as it may seem, it is interesting to emphasise that in some educational institutes (particularly private ones), it was found that students were not allowed to communicate in Kashmiri. Such practices of indirectly implementing Urdu are not particularly hidden; even the English daily newspapers of the state often highlight such concerns. One of the much-celebrated English dailies, *The Greater Kashmir*, which is published from the valley, highlighted reports on students being punished for communicating in Kashmiri in the vicinity of the school. This obviously contradicts the state's language policy of introducing Kashmiri in schools. On the one hand, the state claims to have introduced Kashmiri in all the schools, but on the other hand, the actual language practice is contradictory, for students are being prevented from using it within school premises.

Interestingly, it has been observed that parents whose children do not actively participate in conversations with teachers or fellow students, or who face any kind of communication-related hindrance, are being advised by teachers to teach their wards Urdu, at home. They consider the use or non-use of Urdu a crucial obstacle in interacting with different groups in school. It is legitimate to state here that a child speaking Kashmiri faces more inconveniences in school than a child from an Urdu-speaking background does. Moreover, it has been noted that parents sometimes force their children to speak Urdu. A fellow Kashmiri, while expressing concern about the future of the Kashmiri language and the role of the younger generation, reinforces this view in the following words:

> Kashmiris have lost their identity, their language. We should be concerned about our language, but on the contrary, we neglect it. Our children are fond of Urdu, English, or any other foreign language but consider Kashmiri a backward and useless language (*The Greater Kashmir*).

The practice of excluding Kashmiri as the medium of instruction in primary schools and of forcing children to communicate in Urdu, or rather, in broken Hindustani, has resulted in the attrition of the cultural lexicon with a serious socio-cultural loss to Kashmir. Teaching Kashmiri as a subject in schools is mere political symbolism, while the actual language

practice is that children are not allowed to use it in school and are discouraged to speak it at home. Furthermore, introducing Kashmiri in the school curriculum was simply a trial for status planning (as was its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India) without any proper corpus planning, which is the foremost component of language standardisation and policy implementation.

## 3.2. Language Proficiencies: Knowledge of a Language(s) and its Associated Skills

Although it may be a universal human attribute, language is hardly simple. For decades, linguists, philosophers, social scientists, and other scholars have engaged in serious scholarly debate on language with its diverse dimensions and aspects. However, from the very beginning, scholars have been reluctant to assert a common definition of language, and there is no specific consensus among them about when a person can be certified as knowing a language. Should knowledge of oral communicative skills signify the knowledge of a language, or should one know all four skills, including the two receptive (speaking and listening) and two productive skills (reading and writing)? Acquiring the abilities to read and write is quite different from learning to speak and understand. Productive skills, that is, reading and writing, need special efforts when compared to acquiring speaking and listening skills, during daily communication activities. To put extra effort into learning reading and writing is determined by different constraints such as the social, cultural, religious, and economical. It has been the case with various speech communities, where the people are capable of using a specific code for (oral) communication but are unable to use the same code to read and write.

An analysis of the knowledge of language skills demonstrates that only 32.7% of the respondents had knowledge of all four skills in the Kashmiri language and that this was three times higher in the case of Urdu (95.5%) [Table 3-2]. This emphasises the growing usage of Urdu in Kashmir.

English follows Urdu with 80.6% of the respondents possessing knowledge of all four skills in the language. With respect to knowing any other language(s), only a small number of respondents reported knowing Hindi and/or Arabic. A small number of respondents (15) who studied in central or Army schools reported knowing Hindi.

**Table 3-2 Respondents' Knowledge of a Language and its Associated Skills**

| Language(s) | Language Skills (%) | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Skills | Understand and Speak | Understand, Speak and Read | Read and Write | Percent | Number |
| Kashmiri | 32.7 | 23.6 | 43.6 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Urdu | 95.5 | 2.0 | 2.5 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| English | 80.6 | 2.0 | - | 17.4 | 100.0 | 108 |
| Others | 46.7 | 26.7* | 13.3 | 13.3 | 100.0 | 15 |

**These 26.7% people were able to understand other languages, primarily Hindi, because of its mutual intelligibility with Urdu. Nevertheless, only half of them were able to read and write it because of the dissimilarity in script.*

It is to be emphasised here that among the respondents who reported understanding and speaking other languages, they reference was mostly to Hindi, because of its mutual intelligibility with Urdu. However, such respondents were unable to read and write it because of its script dissimilarity with Urdu. Among the listed languages, it was only the case with Kashmiri, where a larger number (43.6%) of the respondents claimed to possess all the skills except writing. Nonetheless, it is surprising that most native speakers of Kashmiri are unable to write it. Yet, remarkably, the few respondents able to read and/or write Kashmiri belong to older age groups, and they confessed that their knowledge of writing Kashmiri is because of its script similarity with Urdu (Perso-Arabic), except for the extra diacritic marks used in Kashmiri as compared to Urdu. Those who acknowledged possessing all four skills in the Kashmiri language (32.7%) belong to older age groups (50 and above). This observation indicates that literacy in Kashmiri is very low in demand, which is because of various crucial factors that have contributed to a decline in acquiring literary skills in Kashmiri, among the younger generation.

The analysis presented in Figure 3-1 elucidates that the younger the age, the lower the frequency of possessing all language skills in Kashmiri. In other words, the acquisition of language skills in Kashmiri is declining in the younger generation, in favour of Urdu.

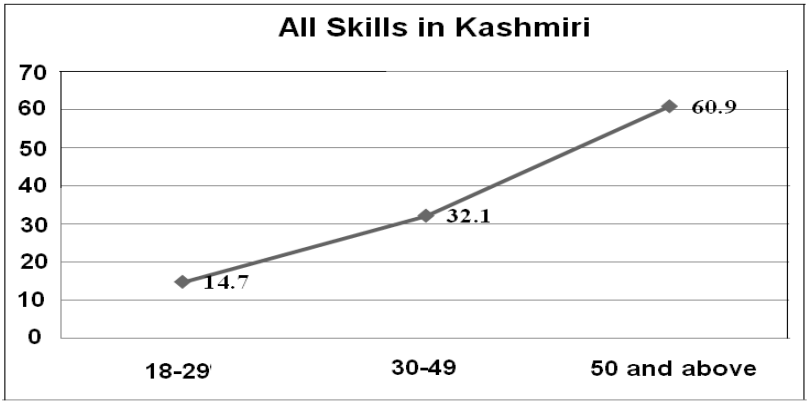



Fig. 3-1 Percentage of respondents of different age groups who have knowledge of all skills in Kashmiri

Trudgill's research on language and social class (1974) showed some interesting differences between men and women. Trudgill found that men were less likely and women more likely to employ prestige varieties—gender language research has shown that women are more likely than men to use those varieties of language that have higher social prestige. Modern gender studies have often shown that in many societies where social stratification is revealed through speech, women tend to use standard or prestige variants significantly more than men do. These results clearly demonstrate that men dominate (45.5%) in having knowledge of all Kashmiri skills, as compared to women (20.2%), which indicates that women communicate relatively less in Kashmiri, probably because of the prestige associated with Urdu. The figure was also relatively higher in rural areas (37.7%) than in urban settings (27.3 %). As far as the correlation between schooling and language skills are concerned, language skills in Kashmiri are lower (21.2%) among those with a private school background, compared to respondents from government schools (39.0%). In other words, this signifies that younger, urban, female respondents with a private school background have excellent knowledge of Urdu, which is, however, minimising similar skills in Kashmiri.

## 3.3. Patterns of Language Use/Practices at Home

The home provides a rich environment for language learning, and it is considered a relatively more suitable context for language acquisition and usage. The United States Census Bureau first initiated research on languages spoken at home. However, in the Kashmiri speech community, no such serious effort has been made to explore the nature of language(s) used in the home context.

**Table 3-3 Language Use in the Home Context**

| With | Languages Used at Home (%) | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri | Urdu and Others | Percent | Number |
| Father | 69.9 | 30.1 | 100.0 | 103 |
| Mother | 80.6 | 19.4 | 100.0 | 103 |
| Siblings | 6.4 | 93.6 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Other relatives | 3.6 | 96.4 | 100.0 | 110 |

The results obtained show that the number of Kashmiris who speak a language other than Kashmiri at home has increased markedly. There could be several reasons for this, such as education, the generation gap, economic advantages, media, technology, and other relevant factors. It is apparent from Table 3-3 that the usage of Kashmiri in the context of the home varies according to the nature of the role-relationship. For example, the usage of Urdu is lower with one's father (30.1%) than with one's siblings (93.6%) or with other relatives (96.4 %). Moreover, the usage of Urdu with one's father is relatively higher (69.9%) than with one's mother (30.1%), possibly because of the difference in the educational backgrounds of the two, where the father is generally more educated. This signifies the nature of the relationship between the educational background of a person and the language s/he prefers. People who are more educated exhibit an increase in the usage of Urdu at home, with a corresponding decrease in Kashmiri. This reinforces the important position that the usage of Urdu at home is increasing among the younger generation. In addition to other covert causes, the generation gap, growing literacy rate, and prestige associated with Urdu are some of the main reasons for this language shift at home among younger age groups, who communicate mostly in Urdu with their peers than they do with their elders.

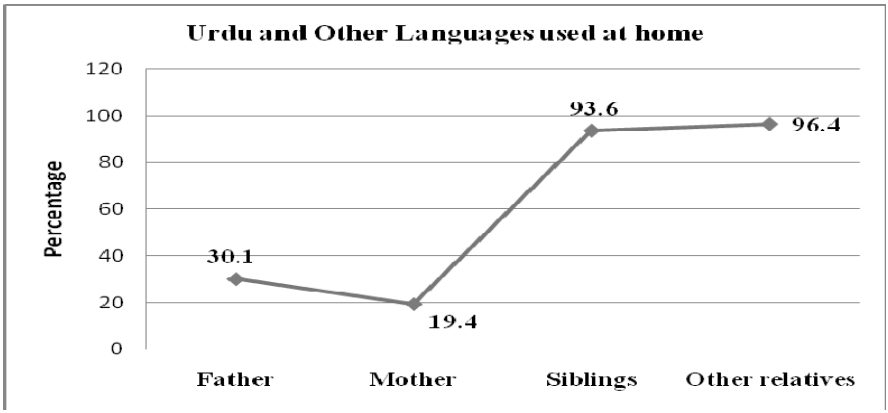



Fig.3-2 Urdu and other languages used at home

Parents who are not well-versed in Urdu try to use broken Urdu or Hindustani to converse with and teach Urdu to their children. It was interesting to observe a semi-bilingual child (Urdu-Kashmiri) who switched his language, not as per the context, but according to the other's manner of dressing. On seeing someone wearing typical Kashmiri clothes, he would switch to Kashmiri, and on seeing someone wearing clothes that are not typically Kashmiri, he would switch to Urdu. Such instances consolidate the position that children perceive the Kashmiri language as one that is conventional and primitive. However, they consider Urdu a symbol of modernity and prestige.

The findings demonstrate significant correlations between languages used at home and different age groups and types of schooling. It emerged that in the home context, as age increases, the frequency of usage of Kashmiri goes up, with a gradual decline in the use of Urdu. Similarly, the usage of Urdu at home by respondents with a private school background is double that of those from government schools (see Appendix D). Moreover, the content of Kashmiri used by the younger generation is a more code-mixed variety that employs lexical items from Hindi/Urdu and English. Code-switching is employed to identify oneself with the dominant and prestigious language group. This phenomenon, in the case of the Kashmiri speech community, may ultimately lead to Urdu becoming the dominant language, which is a common outcome of language contact situations. It is interesting to note that among the younger generation, Urdu phonology has significantly influenced the phonetic features of Kashmiri. While speaking Kashmiri, they 'Urduise' Kashmiri sounds by

mixing/replacing native Kashmiri phonemes with Urdu phonetic and phonological features (see Appendix E and F). However, this needs more investigation, to explore the impact of the phonetic and phonological features of Urdu on native Kashmiri lexical items. For example, the Kashmiri word *wakhat* /wɔ̂kHɔ̂t/ (time) is being pronounced *waqt* /wɔ̂:kt/ by the younger generation. It was seen that parents not only encourage their children to adopt Urdu extensively but also prevent them from communicating in Kashmiri. Occasionally, they feel embarrassed if their children converse in Kashmiri in public. It is remarkable to note that during the author's fieldwork, it was observed that a mother denied her son chocolate for having spoken in Kashmiri and that she was forcing him to speak in Urdu. As Edwards (1985) rightly observed, the most familiar process through which language death occurs is the lack of transmission of a language from parent to child (50).

As the role of Urdu in the home context expands, children will get fewer opportunities to hear and speak Kashmiri, which will ultimately contribute to the attrition and loss of Kashmiri at the phonological, lexical, syntactic, and semantic levels. Home is the essential context for the survival of any native language. If a language is facing declining significance in the home, it is difficult for it to survive. The language used at home represents the actual language behaviour of individuals and groups. It is fair to assume that if a language is unable to gain acceptance and space in the home or family context, it will be hard to imagine its survival in larger spaces like the community and nation.

## 3.4. Language Acquisition Contexts: An Interchange

Pandit, in one of his articles in the daily local English newspaper, *The Greater Kashmir*, discusses that taking refuge in a foreign language and foreign mannerisms emanates from an inferiority complex, a sense of low self-esteem and of collective guilt, and a lack of national dignity and pride. At a collective level, the psyche of the people abhors everything that is traditional, native, and one's own.

Although the role of the context in the acquisition of language(s) has not been investigated thoroughly, it is being asserted that it also plays a crucial role in the learning of languages. The nature of language acquisition contexts varies, and this has an impact on the process of acquisition. The home environment is considered a relatively more suitable context for language acquisition and usage. It is considered a more natural and appropriate environment for language acquisition than school, which is more formal in nature. The home is a context where one

conceptualises a language informally, with all its socio-cultural nuances. Changes in the acquisition contexts of any language in a multilingual setting explicitly imply changing language roles in a speech community, in accordance with the prestige associated with the respective languages.

**Table 3-4 Contexts of Language Acquisition**

| Languages | Context of Acquisition (%) | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | School only | Home only | Home/ Peer group/ Media and others | Percent | Number |
| Kashmiri | - | 59.6 | 40.4 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Urdu | 30.3 | 8.6 | 61.1 | 100.0 | 109 |
| English | 42.1 | - | 57.9 | 100.0 | 107 |

The results given in Table 3-4 signify that in the Kashmiri speech community, the language acquisition contexts of Kashmiri are being interchanged with those of Urdu. Not a single case of acquiring Kashmiri at school has been reported, which reveals the existing reality of language use in educational institutions. It is rather contradictory to the state's language educational policies, where the state claims the introduction of Kashmiri in all middle schools (both government and private). However, 30.3% of the respondents reported having learnt Urdu from school. Nevertheless, 59.6% have mentioned that they acquired the Kashmiri language at home, and the remaining 40.4% stated that they acquired Kashmiri from a combination of the home, peer group, media, and other contexts. Thus, it is clear that in the Kashmiri speech community, the contexts of language acquisition are now interchanging between Kashmiri and Urdu.

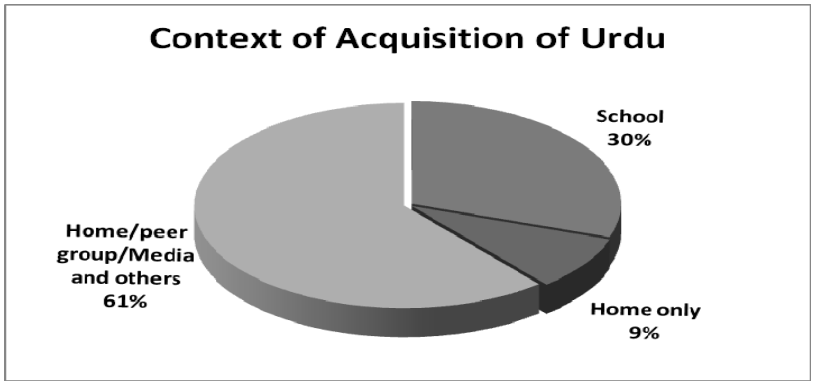



Fig.3-3 Contexts of the acquisition of Urdu

Urdu, which was once primarily acquired and employed in formal and non-home contexts, is now being acquired and used in the informal context of the home. Highlighting the role of the media in language acquisition, Allan Bell (1995) rightly summarises that the media includes important linguistic institutions and that their output constitutes a large portion of the language people experience every day. For Bell, the language used by the media reflects and shapes the language use and attitudes of a speech community. As a crucial social institution, the media may function as the primary or even sole source of native-speaker models. For the Kashmiri speech community, it is significant to note that the respondents also reported acquiring Urdu from the media, mostly broadcasting and electronic media. The media is thus emerging as a new context for the acquisition of Urdu. Almost 40.4% of the respondents (table not given here) reported that they watch serials based on home issues/conflicts, as telecast by several cable operators and private television channels. All such serials employ Hindustani rather than pure Urdu/Hindi lexical items and grammatical structures. Most respondents described the language used in such serials as Urdu, whereas the producers of the serials claim to be using Hindi. It is pertinent to mention that those who cannot read, write, and speak Urdu also watch such family-based serials, and they try to conceptualise the discourse or ask for its interpretation from other family members. In this regard, Bollywood has also played a significant role by creating a sense of motivation towards using Hindustani. As many as 95.3% of the people said that they watch Bollywood movies and have easy access to cable television channels and satellite TV. This not only provides an effortless way to acquire a

language but also creates motivation to learn the language spoken by the elite and by film and television stars.

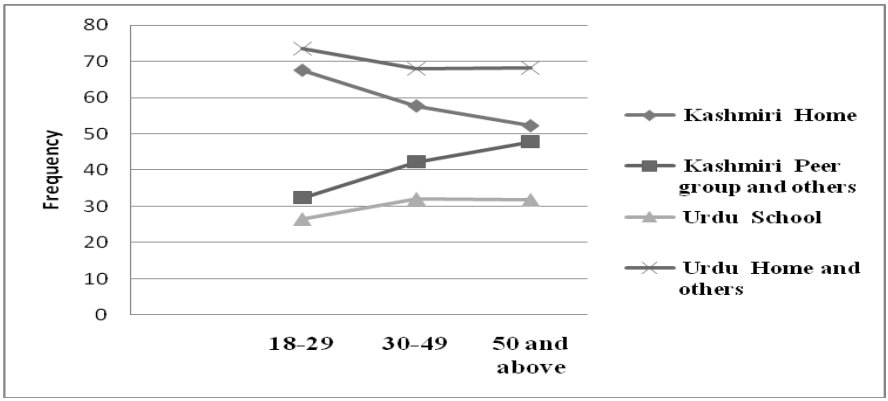



Fig. 3-4 Correlation of various age groups with the contexts of acquisition of Kashmiri and Urdu

The analysis indicates a significant association between age and context of acquisition of Kashmiri and Urdu. Most of the respondents who learnt Urdu in the home context (41.2%) are younger in age (18–29 years). The probable reason for this is that among the younger generation, the language and language acquisition contexts are changing, and the frequency of acquiring Urdu at home is increasing rapidly, which was not the case with the older generations.

English still has less relevance in the home context and does not find conducive space there, as compared to Urdu. It is thus reasonable to assume that in the near future, the probability of English replacing Urdu/Kashmiri at home is extremely low. Most of the respondents who possess knowledge of English reported that either they acquired it in school or in other contexts; no one reported having learnt it only at home.

It can be concluded that in the Kashmiri speech community, the contexts of the acquisition and usage of languages are changing. They are expanding and providing broader space and conditions for the acquisition and usage for Urdu, while becoming increasingly confined for Kashmiri. By studying the expansion and frequency of the Urdu acquisition contexts, it is fair to conclude that in the coming decades, Urdu might replace most of the contexts still employed for the acquisition and usage of the Kashmiri language.

## 3.5. Acquisition of Scripts: Changing Context Patterns

Writing is rarely acknowledged explicitly as an important factor in linguistic evolution. The development of writing was one of the great human inventions. It is not merely a visual surrogate of speech. Writing refers to any of the many visual systems used for representing language, including handwriting, printing, and electronic displays of written form. Writing has always been an important part of school/teaching. After all, traditionally, the main task of primary school is to teach children how to read and write, and how to use language properly; that is, not as it is used in normal casual speech. In other words, in schools, a shift takes place from the everyday spoken language to formal normative language. Writing is usually treated as merely a secondary manifestation, a relatively unproblematic and theoretically uncontroversial reflection of spoken language. As pointed out by Bloomfield, "Writing is not language but merely a way of recording language by means of visible marks" (21). People tend to ignore the differences between the language systems underlying speech and writing. It is assumed that there is one single system—what Saussure termed *la langue*—that underlies both manifestations. In Chomsky's terms, some would assume one monolithic linguistic competence and not an aggregate of partially distinct capabilities. For example, one for language used in speaking and listening, and one for language used in writing and reading. 'Performance' is usually considered as the performance of speech communication. Saussure simply used the term *parole* (literally 'speech'). Such an attitude needs to be questioned. There are obvious differences between speech and writing, spoken language and written language, and communication via spoken utterances and via written texts. In almost all societies, written language and literacy have always been associated with some prestige as compared to spoken language. Koul (2005) emphasises that "the writing system is not only a mode of communication through the visual medium but also has social value attached to it. It serves as a symbol of identity..." (164). Therefore, it is simply not true that writing is 'merely an external device' or a 'visual surrogate' used to "preserve, for our observation, some features of the speech of past times" (282), as argued by Bloomfield.

Learning to write necessitates a great deal of education, and this includes, in no small measure, the learning of conscious norms. On the other hand, a person's spoken vernacular is acquired without any explicit instruction, and it may be argued that it is constrained by fewer grammatical rules. The acquisition of the ability to read and write is quite different from learning to speak and understand speech. Normally, a

considerable amount of explicit instruction is needed. Thus, the acquisition of written language belongs to the so-called secondary socialisation, in which the school and other cultural institutions play a very important part. Since schooling and education are unevenly distributed among different social classes, while spoken language is largely every man's property, written language belongs to the educated elite. This is closely associated with the functions of written language in a stratified society.

Written language is used mainly in the non-private sphere, and again, unlike spoken language, it is not integrated with everyday knowledge and culture but is associated mostly with various kinds of abstract knowledge, separate from the world of direct experience. Kashmiri is no exception; the conditions under which written language is generally taught have promoted the rather common belief that some variants of written language represent the (grammatically) correct language, whereas many variants of the spoken language are incorrect, defective, incoherent, ugly, and/or rude. Thus, it can be said that certain features, which are ascribed to written language, have their natural counterparts in certain spoken genres. Writing, as such, has had a profound influence on the thinking of people, since it always transforms the structure of language and gives prominence to certain features. This then creates a special type of background for the development of linguistic theory; a theory of written language cannot and should not be identical to a corresponding theory of spoken language. The high status of written language in almost all societies has a profound background and ideology.

The language of literacy in a community has the potential to be associated with prestige, because the negative connotations and stigmas associated with 'illiteracy' are part of a wider ideological discourse that devalues vernacular literacy and non-standard varieties of oral practices. In both Kashmir and the neighboring state of Uttar Pradesh, sign boards with slogans written on them convey that illiteracy is the leprosy of society, suggesting that an illiterate person is like a leper.

Further, the written word has had a homogenising influence on people. In most communities, the high status and positive connotations of written language and literacy attract people to adopt it for spoken purposes too. The choice of language for writing purposes may involve several religious, political, and social factors, and is hence not determined simply by orthography. Thus, in addition to other factors, the written form of language also plays an important role in the selection of a certain language from the multiplicity of indigenous varieties. To learn the written form is to learn the standard form, and through that, to join the group of the educated and cultural elite.

Bhat (2008, 2013), while studying the power of scripts in changing the roles of language, emphasises that Urdu discourse and literacy in Kashmir has played a crucial role in the flourishing of Urdu in the region, and has devalued Kashmiri oral practices because of the prestige associated with Urdu literacy and written language. When the literacy movement started in Kashmir, the prestige associated with Urdu rendered it not only the primary choice but also the first language to be accepted for the purposes of writing and education. Most literate people in Kashmir use Urdu for the purposes of reading and writing. Moreover, Bhat (2007) observes that Urdu discourse is employed in almost all written marriage agreements (*nikah namahs),* sign boards (See Appendix G), and judicial, police, and revenue records.

During the early fifties, Kashmiri was introduced in Kashmir's schools from Class I to V (the primary level), not only as a subject of study but also as a medium of instruction. Nevertheless, the experiment was discontinued soon after, based on the excuse of the script controversy that arose between Perso-Arabic and Devanagari. It was not the mother tongue but the script that was to be taught.

The language Dogri, which is spoken mostly in Jammu, officially has two scripts: Nastalique and Nagri. Similarly, Gurmukhi and Nastalique are officially recognised by the State as alternate scripts for writing Punjabi. For Urdu, Perso-Arabic script was accepted as its official script. Hence, the same script also served the purpose of the Kashmiri language when it came to be written in the 10$^{th}$ century. Curiously enough, the script continued to be in use for some time even after the advent of Islam, and it co-existed for a few years with Perso-Arabic script, particularly on some tombstones. Earlier, however, Pandit Ishwar Kaul employed Nagri script for Kashmiri for the first time, for his monumental work on Kashmiri grammar, titled '*Kashmira-Sabdamritam*'. Grierson adopted his system of diacritics for his *Dictionary of the Kashmiri Language*. In the mid-thirties, Pratap magazine of S. P. College, Srinagar, started Kashmiri sections in both Persian and Devanagari. However, the first persistent attempt to use Nagri script for the purposes of contemporary Kashmiri was made by the periodical, *Pamposh*, of Delhi. Later, the *Koshur Samachar* of the Kashmiri Samiti, Delhi, commendably continued the practice. In the early forties, the State introduced 'Aasan Urdu' in both scripts, on the recommendation of a committee with Zakir Hussain as its Chairman and Khwaja Ghulam-us-Sayedain as its Secretary. In fact, the committee produced a basic glossary of Aasan Urdu terms (published in both scripts). Due to some unknown reasons, the project was not effectively followed up after Saiyedian resigned from the job. During the mid-seventies, however,

it was deemed advisable, once again, to provide school teachers (in government schools) with knowledge of both the scripts. However, mysteriously, again, the scheme was shelved and almost hushed up, despite the fact that the Kashmir University's department of correspondence courses, now called Distance Education, had a set of textbooks prepared in both scripts (Perso-Arabic and Nagri), as the common medium of instruction at the primary level.

**Table 3-5-A Contexts for the Acquisition of the Script(s)**

| Languages | Learning of the Script(s) | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | School | Home and others* | Percent | Number |
| Kashmiri | 35.3 | 64.7 | 100.0 | 20 |
| Urdu | 66.7 | 33.3 | 100.0 | 108 |
| English | 77.6 | 22.4 | 100.0 | 107 |

**Includes peer group and media*

In the introductory chapter, the script uncertainty of the Kashmiri language and its different aspects was discussed. In the present study, it has been noted that only 18% of the respondents know the script of Kashmiri. In 2001, Kak observed that 97% of educated Kashmiris are unable to read and write Kashmiri, while being able to use Urdu and English. Moreover, more people know Perso-Arabic script for writing Kashmiri, as it is similar to Urdu's script. Interestingly, not a single respondent learnt Perso-Arabic script specifically to read and write Kashmiri.

Based on the observations presented in Table 3-2, it is significant to note that almost all the respondents (95.5%) were able to write Urdu in Perso-Arabic script. Among them, a large number (66.7%) claimed to have learnt the script for Urdu from school, and the rest (33.3%) did so from home and other contexts. This exemplifies the dominance of Urdu in written and literacy discourse. In such patterns of script acquisition, English, rather than Kashmiri, follows Urdu.

There have been different theories, arguments, and factors that explain the dimensions of language shift. The present work substantiates the argument that in addition to other factors responsible for triggering language shift, literacy practices and writing/orthography play a major role and lead to the transition of linguistic identities.

The development of writing produces an unprecedented alteration in the communicative ecology of any speech community, and although it clearly does not lead to the emergence of inter-lingual diglossia or

biglossia in every instance, it creates a particularly hospitable environment for it when combined with other supporting factors. Based on the observations outlined, it is reasonable to argue that the script uncertainty for Kashmiri has led to a situation of biglossia in the Kashmiri speech community, where there is an apparent functional distribution between spoken and other (non-native) written varieties. The prestige associated with non-native written varieties has devalued oral practices of the native vernacular variety, which will ultimately prove to be an important factor in triggering a language shift. These written languages have rendered the spoken indigenous variety a 'restricted code', insufficient as a basis for societal and career advancement.

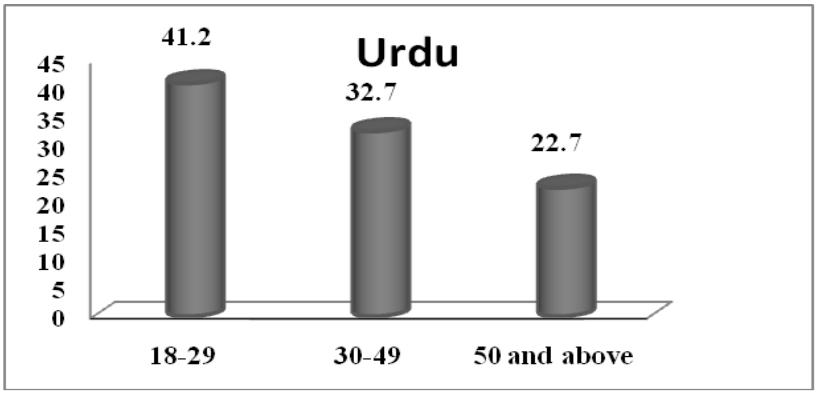



Fig. 3-5 Correlation between age and acquisition contexts of the scripts

Analysing the correlation between age and acquisition contexts of the scripts, an increase in the frequency of acquiring Urdu in the home context emerged, from higher to lower age groups, as clearly seen in Fig. 3-5.

It is obvious that the contexts of acquisition of Urdu are changing. Once acquired in contexts other than the home, it is now being acquired at home by the younger generation. Similarly, with respect to the variation of language acquisition contexts with gender, it is evident (Table 3-5-B) that the frequency of female respondents acquiring Urdu at home is double (43.4%) that of male respondents (23.6%). A difference of 10% can be noted among rural and urban respondents; in rural areas, 29.0% reported to have acquired Urdu at home, while 39.1% of those from urban areas did so. As far as schooling is concerned, it was found that the frequency of respondents with a private school background who have acquired Urdu in the context of the home was more (52.8%) than those with a government

school background (23.6%). Thus, parents who manage to send their children to private schools are usually in an economically better position (and hence teach their children Urdu at home, as a symbol of prestige and social upliftment), vis-à-vis those who send their children to government schools. In summary, it was observed that for the Kashmiri speech community, language acquisition contexts are changing, such that Urdu has now occupied informal contexts of acquisition. Moreover, it is flourishing more among women, rural areas, and respondents with a private school background.

**Table 3-5-B Correlation of Background Characteristics with Contexts of Acquisition of the Scripts for Kashmiri and Urdu**

| | Kashmiri | | Urdu | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Home | School and others | School | Home and others | Percent | Number |
| **Age** | | | | | | |
| 18–29 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 58.8 | 41.2 | 100.0 | 34 |
| 30–49 | 40.0 | 60.0 | 67.3 | 32.7 | 100.0 | 53 |
| 50 and above | 30.8 | 69.2 | 77.3 | 22.7 | 100.0 | 23 |
| Total | 35.9 | 64.1 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Gender** | | | | | | |
| Male | 24.0 | 76.0 | 76.4 | 23.6 | 100.0 | 56 |
| Female | 57.1 | 42.9 | 56.6 | 43.4 | 100.0 | 54 |
| Total | 35.9 | 64.1 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Place of Residence** | | | | | | |
| Rural | 37.5 | 62.5 | 71.0 | 29.0 | 100.0 | 63 |
| Urban | 33.3 | 66.7 | 60.9 | 39.1 | 100.0 | 47 |
| Total | 35.9 | 64.1 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Type of Schooling** | | | | | | |
| Government | 33.3 | 66.7 | 76.4 | 23.6 | 100.0 | 73 |
| Private | 44.4 | 55.6 | 47.2 | 52.8 | 100.0 | 37 |
| **Total** | 35.9 | 64.1 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 100.0 | 110 |

## 3.6. Usage of the Language(s): A Functional Perspective

It has been observed that in the case of bi-/multi- lingual communities, different codes are used for different purposes in different contexts. From a functional perspective, different languages are used according to the requirement and function of the individual/community. Thus, language use

varies according to the different cultural, social, and religious purposes and contexts. In the present study, there was an attempt to examine the functional aspects of the different languages in the Kashmiri speech community, with the aim to understand the actual language behaviour and practices of the community. The results obtained are as follows.

**Table 3-6 Languages Preferred by Respondents for Different Functions**

| Functions | Language(s) | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri | Urdu | Both English and Urdu | Percent | Number |
| Counting | 13.6 | 55.0 | 31.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Thinking | 65.1 | 34.9 | 6.5 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Story-telling | 31.4 | 63.4 | 5.2 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Arguing | 38.4 | 56.6 | 5.0 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Praying | 49.1 | 50.9 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Kinship-calling | 11.4 | 86.4 | 2.2 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Dreaming | 71.8 | 28.2 | - | 100.0 | 110 |

The detailed description of the table is under various headings.

### 3.6.1. Language Use for Counting

Most speech communities have developed their own counting system in their first language, and they usually learn it more easily in their first language than in a second language.

In the Kashmiri speech community, it has been identified that only a small percentage of the respondents (13.6%) reported using Kashmiri for counting purposes but nearly four times that number use Urdu for counting (55.0%). The remaining 31.4% reported using English to count. A careful examination of the results reveals that in the Kashmiri speech community, there is a significant hierarchy of employing Urdu for counting purposes.

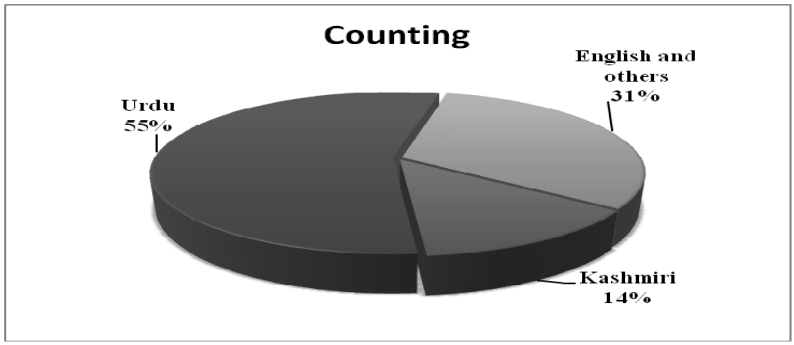



Fig. 3-6 Languages used for counting

**Table 3-7 Correlation of Background Characteristics with Languages Used for Counting**

| | Counting | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri | Urdu and Others | Percent | Number |
| **Age** | | | | |
| 18–29 | 14.7 | 85.3 | 100.0 | 34 |
| 30–49 | 11.3 | 88.7 | 100.0 | 53 |
| 50 and above | 17.4 | 82.6 | 100.0 | 23 |
| Total | 13.6 | 86.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Gender** | | | | |
| Male | 17.9 | 82.1 | 100.0 | 56 |
| Female | 9.3 | 90.7 | 100.0 | 54 |
| Total | 13.6 | 86.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Place of Residence** | | | | |
| Rural | 17.0 | 83.0 | 100.0 | 63 |
| Urban | 11.1 | 88.9 | 100.0 | 47 |
| Total | 13.6 | 86.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Type of Schooling** | | | | |
| Government | 17.8 | 82.2 | 100.0 | 73 |
| Private | 5.4 | 94.6 | 100.0 | 37 |
| **Total** | 13.6 | 86.4 | 100.0 | 110 |

An analysis of the data on the relationship between the language used to count and the background characteristics of the respondents (Table 3-7) demonstrates that as we move from older to younger age groups, the role of Urdu for counting purposes enhances; older age groups use mostly

Kashmiri for the purpose of counting. Interestingly, fewer women use Kashmiri (9.3%) to count, as compared to men (17.9%). Similarly, a difference, though little, has been noticed between rural and urban respondents for using Urdu or Kashmiri for counting purposes; in urban settings, the role of Urdu for counting is relatively more significant. With respect to type of schooling, the study revealed that respondents with a government school background use Kashmiri more frequently, compared to those with a private school background, who mostly use Urdu (94.6%). The above empirical evidence demonstrates that among younger age groups, and particularly among females, respondents belonging to urban areas and with a private school background use Urdu for counting purposes much more than they use Kashmiri.

### 3.6.2. Language(s) Employed for Thinking

The view that language anchors thought was first advanced in detail by several German thinkers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and the hypothesis that favours this position has been substantiated. Philosophers and linguists commonly conceive of language as a means through which speakers convey the content of their thoughts to others. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in linguistics states that the structure of one's mother tongue influences the way one's mind perceives the world. The famous Austrian-British philosopher Wittgenstein—who also worked primarily in the areas of the philosophy of the mind and the philosophy of language—stated, "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world" (56). Similarly, Benjamin Lee Whorf emphasises that the language people speak in has a systematic influence on how they think about and interact with reality. In the present study, an attempt was made to find out the language(s) used by the Kashmiri speech community for intrapersonal process such as thinking, praying, and dreaming. Such processes do not predetermine acts of identity or identity statements; rather, they determine the actual language behaviour of the individual through which the world is conceptualised.

The findings given in Table 3-6 (also shown in Fig. 3-7) affirm that in the Kashmiri speech community, 65.1% of the respondents reported thinking in Kashmiri, and among the rest, 34.9% and 6.5% think in Urdu and English, respectively. Such observations illustrate that there is still space for Kashmiri as the basic language used for private/individual functions, consciously or unconsciously, whereas Urdu and English do not yet dominate personal functional aspects. However, the rising percentage of Urdu in the intrapersonal functional aspects of dreaming, praying, and

thinking is a significant fact that suggests that in coming years, Urdu may overtake Kashmiri in such functional aspects too.

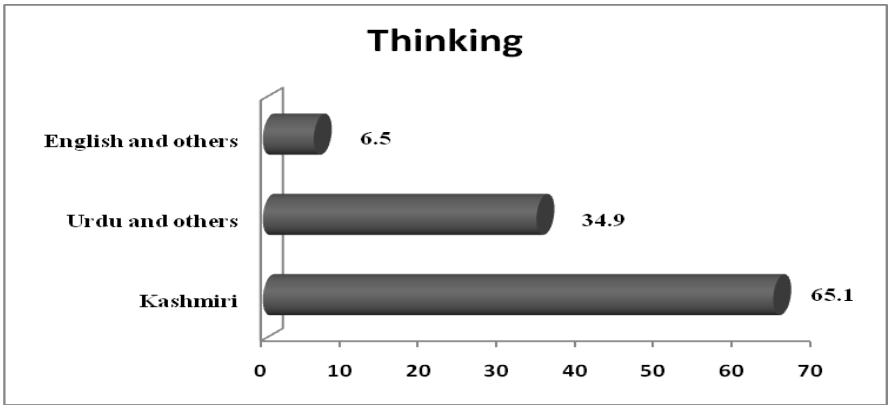



Fig.3-7 Language(s) Used for Thinking

**Table 3-8 Correlation of Age and Type of Schooling with Language(s) Used for Thinking**

| | Thinking | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri | Urdu and others | Percent | Number |
| **Age** | | | | |
| 18–29 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 100.0 | 34 |
| 30–49 | 69.2 | 30.8 | 100.0 | 53 |
| 50 and above | 78.3 | 21.7 | 100.0 | 23 |
| Total | 65.1 | 34.9 | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Type of Schooling** | | | | |
| Government | 73.6 | 26.4 | 100.0 | 73 |
| Private | 48.6 | 51.4 | 100.0 | 37 |
| Total | 65.1 | 34.9 | 100.0 | 110 |

By correlating the thinking process with different background characteristics, such as age and schooling, it appears from Table 3-8 that among younger age groups (18–29), 50.0% of the respondents reported using Urdu for thinking purposes, whereas the percentage was 21.7% among older age groups (50 and above). Similarly, with respect to schooling, the frequency of respondents from private schools who think in Urdu (51.4%) was nearly double the frequency of those from government

schools (26.4%). This indicates that for younger age groups, the role of Urdu for functions like thinking expands, with a corresponding gradual decline for thinking in Kashmiri. Further, it signifies the growing trend of Urdu usage in the new generation of the Kashmiri speech community, not only as a spoken language to be identified with but also as a medium to think and conceptualise the world around them.

### 3.6.3. Language(s) Used for Religious Discourses

Many religions have employed a sacred language for the purposes of propagation and communication—Hebrew for Judaism, classical Arabic for Islam, Sanskrit for Hinduism, and Pali for Theravada Buddhism. Because the major world religions are ancient, the languages they use are often partially or wholly unintelligible to the laity and sometimes even to the clergy. There is a difference between the two notions of religious language: 'praying in tongues' and 'speaking in tongues'. Praying in tongues is offering prayer to God. Some religions view praying in tongues as a personal prayer language between a believer and God. According to Muslim testimonials, one can offer personal prayers in any language; hence, God knows all the possible languages and communicative systems of the universe. Yet, in religious matters, the significance of speaking in tongues cannot be over-emphasised.

As far as the Kashmiri speech community is concerned, it is to be noted that most Muslims know at least a few Arabic (Koranic) verses for praying purposes, with or without knowing their meaning. Urdu is the predominant language for prayer, as shown in Table 3-6, with almost 50.9% respondents reporting the use of Urdu as the language for praying purposes. One of the possible reasons for this is the existence of an enormous number of Urdu translations of Islamic literature and specific prayer verses, which are easy to understand and are a better alternative to simply reciting them in Arabic. Moreover, the Kashmir Valley has become an accommodative place for *imams* (religious preachers) from outside the state (particularly from northern India). In addition to Arabic, these individuals mostly use Urdu (which is also their first language) for giving sermons in mosques. However, half of the respondents still reported using Kashmiri for praying purposes. Nevertheless, quite interestingly, not a single respondent claimed to use English to pray. Probable reasons for this could be that in Kashmir, readership practices for the English translation of Arabic texts, including the Holy Koran, are very few. Thus, it can be argued that Urdu is dominating religious discourse and religious understanding, whereas English still has not occupied any space in this

area, among the Kashmiri speech community. From this perspective, it is fair to conclude that Urdu is considered more sacred than Kashmiri or English.

### 3.6.4 Language(s) of Dreams

Intrapersonal activities like thinking and dreaming are considered crucial from the functional perspective of language. Dreaming and thinking are involuntary, unlike the language used for ordinary daily communication, which is consciously controlled, deliberately planned and context bound. The language of dreams is essentially a more spontaneous form of linguistic behaviour than is everyday communication. Scientific research has revealed that one dreams mostly in the language through which one has conceptualised the world (which, most often, is the first language or mother tongue).

Most of the participants (71.8%) expressed that they dream in Kashmiri, although they use Urdu in most other contexts (as the language of everyday communication). However, 28.2% reported that they dream in Urdu. Such a phenomenon signifies that Urdu is making its space even in spontaneous processes like dreaming. Furthermore, this is an indication of a transition, and as time passes, a higher percentage of people may report that they dream in Urdu.

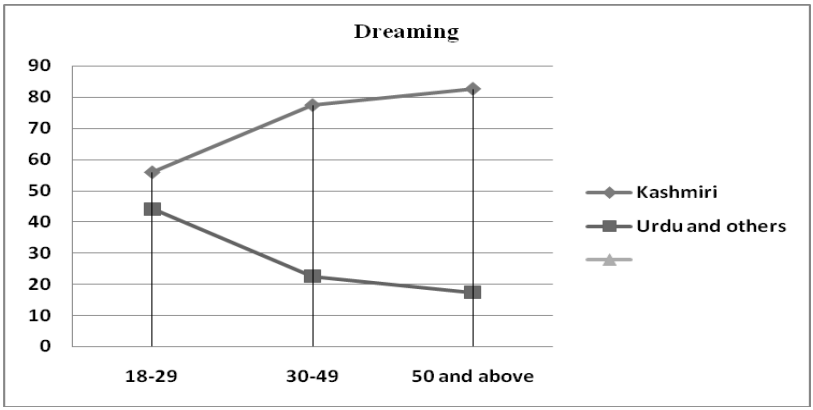



Fig. 3-8 Correlation of the different age groups with dreaming in Urdu and Kashmiri

The above figure explains that as we move from higher to lower age groups, there is a marked increase in the frequency of dreaming in Urdu, and consequently, a gradual decline in the frequency of dreaming in Kashmiri. Nevertheless, none of the respondents reported dreaming in English, which indicates that English has not yet occupied the space of spontaneous processes such as thoughts and dreams. It is Urdu that has occupied some space in involuntary linguistic activities and that may overtake Kashmiri in the coming decades, if the situation continues the same way.

### 3.6.5. Story-Telling and Arguing

Language(s) have always played a crucial role in oral tradition practices, including sharing stories, legends, history, fairy tales, and myths with the next generation. In any language, story-telling not only helps children conceptualise cultural notions but also helps them learn the language, as it makes the language enjoyable and comprehensible. Story-telling facilitates an understanding of the narrative discourse of the community; helps communicate experiences, thoughts, and feelings; and, aids in understanding concepts of the given culture and its worldview.

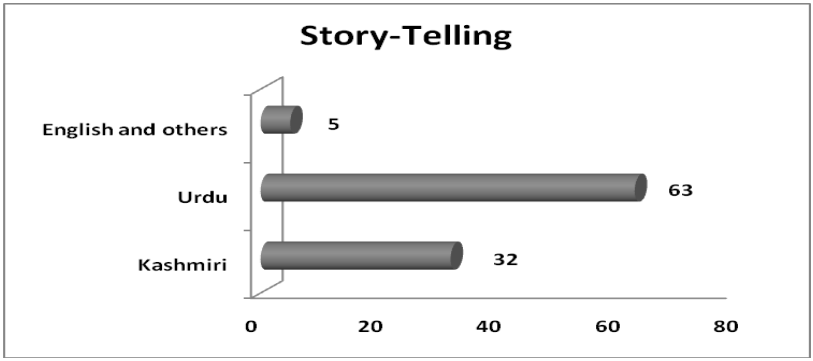



Fig. 3-9 Languages used for Story-telling

As is evident from Figure 3.9, almost 32% of the respondents reported using Kashmiri for the purpose of story-telling. It is important to mention here that all those who use Kashmiri to tell stories, use it as rhetoric in oral tradition only. The percentage of respondents who use Urdu for story-telling is almost double (63%). However, they employ written narratives from different written sources.

There are two components to the value of language in telling a story. In the first, there is the language used when writing a story. The second component to the value of language is oral tradition. In story-telling, words are communicated orally and not through reading. Oral tradition makes use of eye contact, gestures, tones of voice, accents, timing, pacing—such that all of these combine to enliven the story and increase motivation to learn the language. Probably the most important aspect of telling a story in a language with a weak and uncertain written tradition is to pass on the culture, mythology, and other forms of oral tradition to the next generation. Ironically, this study shows that oral tradition, including story-telling, is declining in the Kashmiri speech community. Consequently, this will result in the loss of oral tradition practices. Since such a lexicon is not frozen in written form, a decline in story-telling will ultimately contribute to the loss of oral tradition and socio-cultural lexicon, which will subsequently contribute to the loss of the Kashmiri language.

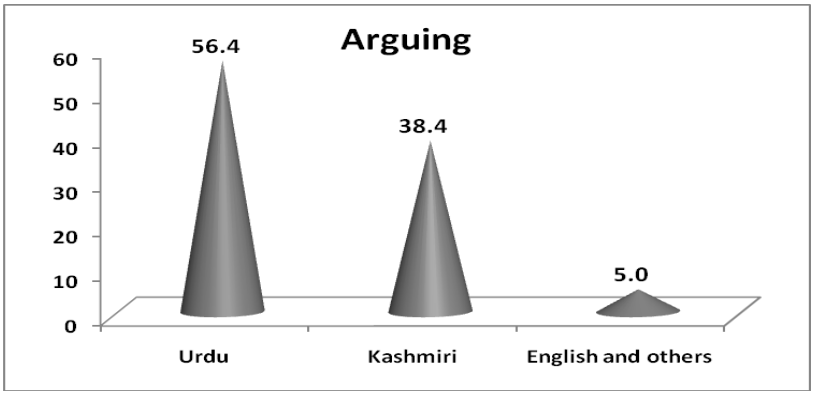



Fig. 3-10 Languages Used for Arguing

One of the purposes of speech is to argue. Every speech community engages in a limited set of speech activities: lecturing, sermoning, gossiping, joking, arguing, and fighting. Moreover, the makings of an argument vary from community to community. What may be considered a simple statement in one community may be seen as provocation in another. While arguing and fighting, or even while expressing emotions and especially difficult feelings such as fear, rejection, insecurity, disappointment, frustration, anxiety, and shame, there is a spontaneous use of language, instead of a deliberately planned or conscious control of it.

However, it has been noticed that at times, when arguing, people use what they consider a superior language to try to suppress their opponent(s). Figure 4.10 demonstrates that the frequency of respondents who employ Urdu while arguing is more (56.6%) than that of Kashmiri (38.4%). This can be interpreted in two ways: in the Kashmiri speech community, more people use Urdu, to assert a sense of dominance and prestige while making their argument; or, they have conceptualised Urdu to such an extent that the language is spontaneously expressed while arguing.

### 3.6.6. Kinship-calling

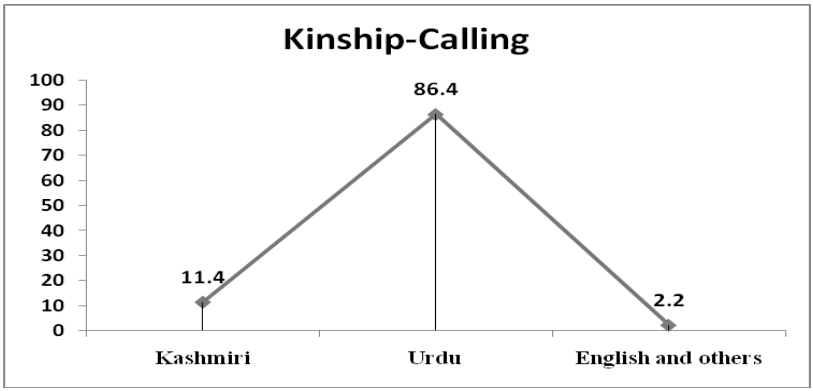



Fig. 3-11 Languages used for Kinship-calling

Kinship terms, according to E. R. Leach (1958), are "category words by means of which an individual is taught to recognise the significant groupings in the social structure into which he is born" (143). There is also an extensive and growing body of sociolinguistic literature on modes of address in general, including but not limited to the use of kinship terms in address, in different languages and societies. For example, following the classic studies of Roger Brown and Albert Gilman (1960), and Brown and Marguerite Ford (1961), research on personal address has been conducted in a wide range of languages. Accordingly, kinship terms, which were used in a variety of ways in the diplomatic, legal, and literary sources of the medieval period, were used as honorifics and as indicators of similar experience or background, or as indicators of potential heritability. Most speech communities use specific terminology to name the people around them, based on age, relationship, gender, and other social factors. In some cultures, calling someone by his/her proper name is considered

disrespectful, whereas in other cultures, it is considered a sign of respect and solidarity. However, in the Kashmiri speech community, use of kinship terminology is highly appreciated and respected, and is used mostly for solidarity, though it is sometimes to convey an underlying sense of superiority.

As evident from Table 3-6 (and Fig.3-11), Urdu (86.4%) dominates Kashmiri in the utilisation of kinship terminology (11.4%). The probable main factors for this are the influence of the media, and of Urdu literary discourse. A number of Urdu periodicals, journals, magazines, and stories use specific kinship Urdu terminology for the characters in their stories, dramas, etc. Moreover, Urdu serials telecast on the national channel of Pakistan Television (PTV), watched for the last two decades, have also motivated and persuaded people to adopt the use of kinship terminology employed by the highly urbane characters of the family-based serials, with the soft-spoken Urdu expressions having a deep impact on kinship terminology. It is acknowledged that the media has a powerful effect on shaping and reshaping the realities and worldview of audiences. Although Kashmiri possesses a full kinship terminology of its own, people, particularly of the younger generation, feel embarrassed to use popular Kashmiri expressions for kinship-calling, as they feel they are dated and not contemporary. Merely a small number (11.4%) reported using Kashmiri for kinship-calling. English, like in other functional aspects, is rarely used for kinship-calling, and only a small fraction of the respondents (2.2%) reported using it. However, the study illustrates that the frequency of kinship-calling in Urdu exhibits a marked growth from older to younger age groups. Similarly, in reference to the correlation between gender and kinship-calling, the frequency of Urdu kinship-calling in females is double that of males. Among type of schooling, the usage of Urdu kinship-calling in respondents from private schools is double that of respondents from government schools. It can thus be concluded that because of an underlying loyalty to Urdu, the usage of Urdu kinship terminology is more dominant among those who are younger, female, and with a private school background. Further, it is possible to assume that in the future, Urdu will completely replace Kashmiri in kinship-calling.

## 3.7. Writing and Readership Practices

The script uncertainty of the Kashmiri language and its changing acquisition contexts have been discussed in Section 3.2.1. Historically, Kashmiris have cultivated and given preference to elitist languages and literature such as Sanskrit, Persian, Urdu, and in recent years, English,

with bewilderment over the script for Kashmiri. The crucial socio-political reasons for this are incredibly complex, where on the one hand, Kashmiri is accepted as a scheduled language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India, but on the other hand, there is negligence shown towards the standardisation, modernisation, and growth of its script and written form. Bhat (2008) observes that the Kashmiri speech community reflects a complete biglossic or diglossic situation, where languages other than Kashmiri are being used for writing purposes.

**Table 3-9 Languages Used for Writing**

| For Writing | Language(s) Used | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Urdu Only | English only | Urdu and English | Percent | Number |
| Letters | 36.4 | 22.7 | 40.9 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Articles | 36.5 | 26.0 | 37.5 | 100.0 | 104 |
| Emails | 5.5 | 87.1 | 7.7 | 100.0 | 91 |
| SMS | 4.2 | 64.2 | 31.6 | 100.0 | 95 |
| Diaries and Personal Matters | 35.5 | 26.5 | 38.1 | 100.0 | 110 |

The table shows that not even a single respondent reported using Kashmiri for writing.

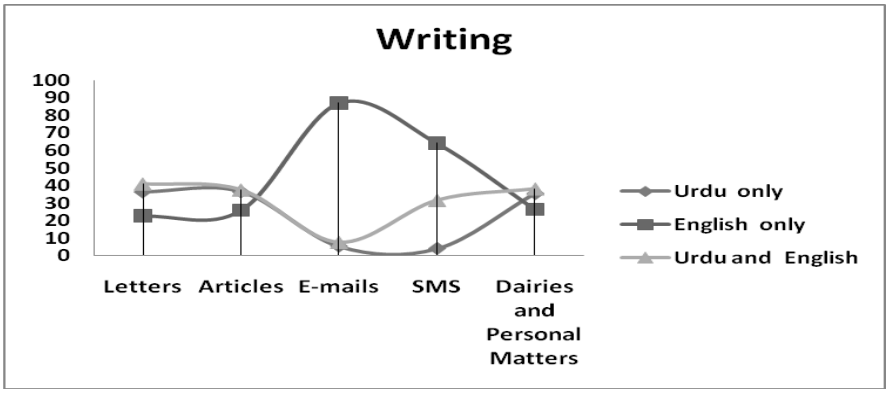



Fig. 3-12 Languages used for writing

In the Kashmiri speech community, like in any other speech community, not all people are interested in writing practices. Hence, not all respondents were able to write articles, emails, or SMSes; hence, the results acquired are either mainly from those respondents who use the language(s) mentioned for writing purposes or would like to use them if they had the choice. Table 3-9 demonstrates that Urdu and English (together) dominate, with 40.9% of the respondents using them to write letters, followed by Urdu alone (36.4%). Similarly, the state of affairs for writing articles, diary entries, and personal matters is similar to the results for writing letters. However, the situation is different as far as the two new modes of writing are concerned (SMSes and emails). Riding the crest of globalisation and technology, English dominates this world as no language has ever done. Bhat (2008), acknowledging the dominance of English in the era of microelectronics, calls it "the global lingua franca of information communication technology". Like other speech communities, the effects of microelectronics and communication technology and the associated dominance of English, have had their impact on the Kashmiri speech community as well. The Kashmiri speech community is not very technologically advanced, and the number of internet users is low, as compared to other Indian cites. Nevertheless, in the use of mobile phone technology, Kashmir no longer lags behind any other Indian city and all major mobile phone service providers offer services in Kashmir. Although Urdu is considered a prestigious language, like other ignored languages, it has not attracted the attention of software and hardware giants to develop it as a language of microelectronics technology. As observed from the study, people in Kashmir do not expect Kashmiri to be used in the latest modes of communication such as SMS or in cyberspace. As in other parts of the world, English is predominant in Kashmir too, for the purpose of information/communication technology such as emails (87.1%) and SMSes (64.2%). However, a small percentage of respondents who reported using Urdu in this medium, accomplish it by using Roman script to write Urdu (transliteration), as there is no software or hardware to support writing emails and/or SMSes in Urdu in Perso-Arabic script.

The choice of language for writing purposes may involve a host of religious, political, and social factors, and is hence not determined simply by scientific aspects of orthography. Presently, there are at least three different sections of Kashmiri society advocating three different scripts for Kashmiri. The major section constitutes Kashmiri writers (mostly Muslim). According to them, Perso-Arabic script is simple, good, most accommodative, and scientific. The second group consists of people (mostly Hindus) who have migrated from Kashmir during the early

nineties with the onset of the separatist movement. They primarily advocate for Devanagari script, and thus the literature they publish in Kashmiri is in Devanagari. However, the people who support Perso-Arabic script consider the demand for Devanagari as part of a cultural aggression on Kashmir. They believe it redundant to use Devanagari script for Kashmiri, and they argue that it will render the past literature in Kashmiri (written in Perso-Arabic script) unintelligible to future generations. A noted Kashmiri litterateur, M.Y. Taing, cautions that Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (RA) brought Perso-Arabic script to Kashmir, and no Kashmiri would imagine giving up the script, which is considered part of the cultural-religious identity of Kashmiris. Any demand to abandon the script, he argues, would be viewed as an attack on Kashmiri culture and ethos. The third group, though small and constituted mainly of the younger generation from both religious groups, advocates for Roman script for Kashmiri. They consider this the only resolution to save the Kashmiri language in the era of microelectronics and information technology, and that with this; it would become easier for the new generation to learn Kashmiri. Moreover, they substantiate their arguments by exemplifying the case of the Turkish language reformation by Kemal Atatürk, which they consider the main reason for its sustenance. In November 1928, Kemal Atatürk introduced the Turkish alphabet (a variant of the Latin alphabet) as a replacement for Arabic script.

Based on empirical evidences, it can be concluded that there exists a situation of biglossia or interlingual diglossia in Kashmir, with an apparent functional distribution between the spoken and other (non-native) written varieties. Because of the prestige associated with the non-native written variety, oral practices of the native variety have lost some of their value. This prestige norm for Urdu is an important factor in the language shift from Kashmiri to Urdu and in the subsequent transition of linguistic identities among the Kashmiri speech community.

The two language skills—reading and writing—are somehow correlated. Thus, if one knows how to write the alphabet, one would certainly be able to read it as well. In fact, the acquisition of alphabet recognition starts before the writing of it. Generally, people consider reading a simple, passive process that involves following words in a linear fashion and internalising their meaning one at a time. However, reading is actually a very complex process that requires a great deal of active participation on the part of the reader. Table 3-10 clearly shows that identical results of the languages(s) used for writing, none of the respondents reported using Kashmiri for reading.

**Table 3-10 Languages Used for Reading**

| For Reading | Language(s) Used | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Urdu only | English only | Urdu and English | Percent | Number |
| Newspapers | 19.3 | 15.6 | 65.1 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Books | 18.3 | 14.7 | 67.0 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Magazines | 38.2 | 10.8 | 51.0 | 100.0 | 102 |
| Religious Works | 70.5 | - | 29.5 | 100.0 | 108 |

Apparently, if one is unable to write in a specific script, then one can hardly be expected to read it. The readership of the different newspapers, and hence their circulation, have clearly expanded in the valley, particularly during the last two decades. Approximately 32 daily, weekly, and fortnightly newspapers (see Appendix H) are published from the Kashmir, mostly in Urdu, followed by English, and then by Urdu-English bilinguals. Most of the respondents (65.1%) reported that they read Urdu, English, or Urdu-English bilingual newspapers, followed by Urdu publications (19.3%) and then English (15.6%). It is interesting to note that even the prominent daily English newspapers publish some advertisements/announcements in Urdu. In this way, all the newspapers published from Kashmir are bilingual, with Urdu-English bilingualism. Moreover, the quantity, circulation, and readership of the Urdu newspapers are very high as compared to the English ones. Surprisingly, only two weekly Kashmiri newspapers are published from the valley, with limited circulation and readership. In the last two decades, several attempts were made to publish newspapers in Kashmiri. However, such efforts could not be continued because of several constraints, including low finances and readership. As far as Hindi is concerned, it is worth mentioning that not a single Hindi newspaper is published from the valley, nor does anyone subscribe to any Hindi national newspaper from outside the state. Contrary to this, many people subscribe to leading English dailies (such as *The Hindu*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Times of India*) and Urdu newspapers (*Humari Dunyia* and the *Qoumi Awaz*), which are all published from the national capital, Delhi.

With respect to reading practices related to books (other than academic books) and magazines, most respondents reported reading in both Urdu and English, followed by Urdu only, and English only. However, the readership of Urdu magazines, published mostly from outside the state, is more than that of English ones. Such magazines have had a strong influence on socio-cultural aspects of the Kashmiri speech community.

Journals, magazines, and periodicals (such as *Pakiza Anchal, Huma, Mashriqi Anchal* and many more; see Appendix I) are easily available at any roadside bookstall, and many people subscribe to the publications directly, which are from outside the state. Such literary discourse has played a significant role in the establishment of a new Urduised lexicon, through the narratives and characters of the stories they publish, by renaming cuisine items, clothes, personal names, and kinship terminology.

The significance of a religion is claimed to be inherited through religious texts and scriptures. Thus, there is a sense of religion and language being related to one another. It would be impossible to acquire a religion without the medium of language, and there is no religion without language. Hence, language becomes a symbol and part of religious identity. The results obtained for the languages used for reading religious works demonstrate that most respondents (70.5%) reported using Urdu for this purpose. It is interesting to note that not a single person reported using Kashmiri or English to read religious books. However, some respondents (29.5%) mentioned the use of both Urdu and English. Although most Islamic religious scriptures are in Arabic, most Kashmiri Muslims are unable to understand the language (much like Muslims in other parts of the sub-continent). Therefore, Urdu translations of such scriptures are the only sole source of understanding the religion. The additional affinity between Islam and Urdu happens to come from the script similarity with the Arabic language. Thus, Urdu is considered as sacred as Arabic, and as a symbol of Muslim culture and identity.

## 3.8. Conclusion

The chapter discussed the dimensions of changing language roles, linguistic behaviour, and language practices in the multilingual context of the Kashmiri speech community from various functional perspectives, and subsequently investigated their impact on linguistic identities. In this context, the chapter examined the nature of changing acquisition contexts of the spoken and written forms of communication, the usage of language(s) in different domains and contexts, and the use of codes for different requirements, such as counting, thinking, storytelling, arguing, praying, kinship-calling, and dreaming.

It showed that Urdu dominates the education system, as the medium of instruction and education, at various levels. As Urdu is considered a symbol of prestige, Urdu medium schools are flourishing in Kashmir. The present study explicates that despite Kashmiri being the first language of the state, people of the region are unable to read and write in Kashmiri,

whereas most (95.5%) can read and write in Urdu. Interestingly, Urdu also dominates the areas of writing, publication, and reading. There exists a situation of interlingual diglossia in Kashmir with an apparent functional distribution between the spoken and other (non-native) written varieties. The prestige associated with the non-native written variety has devalued oral practices of the native variety.

It is to be emphasised that if a language is unable to gain acceptance and space in the home context, it is hard to imagine its survival in other contexts. It can be hypothesised that in addition to other covert causes, the generation gap, rising global consciousness, growing literacy rate, and prestige associated with Urdu are some of the foremost causes of the language shift in the context of the home, especially among younger age groups who use Urdu with their peers more than with their elders. As the usage of Urdu at home expands, children will get fewer opportunities to hear and speak the Kashmiri language, which will ultimately contribute to the attrition and loss of Kashmiri at the phonologic, lexical, syntactic, and semantic levels. Any language that is suffocated in the home context will find it difficult to survive in other contexts. It may be added that English is still isolated from the home context; most of the respondents who know English reported that they learnt it either in school or in some other context, but no one reported having learnt it only at home.

From a functional perspective, it was observed that Urdu even dominates spontaneous and involuntary linguistic operations such as dreaming and thinking, and personal aspects such as praying. Moreover, in the case of religious discourse, Urdu dominates entirely, from praying to conceptualising religious scriptures. Urdu also leads in the use of kinship terminology. Interestingly, Urdu also dominates writing, publication, and reading practices. There exists a situation of interlingual diglossia in Kashmir with an apparent functional distribution between the spoken and other (non-native) written varieties.

Finally, the chapter substantiated the argument that in addition to other factors responsible for triggering a language shift, literacy practices and writing/orthography are playing an important role, and that this can lead the transition of linguistic identities in Kashmir, with a spillover effect on other identities. In summary, the language roles and language behaviour of the Kashmiri speech community are changing in favour of Urdu, which, in turn, has affected the indigenous linguistic identity.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# LANGUAGE PREFERENCES: ATTITUDES, MOTIVATION, AND IDENTITY ASSERTION

This chapter focuses on the language attitudes and language preferences of the speech community, by investigating the features and attitudes the respondents associate with Kashmiri, Urdu, English, and other languages and with their respective speakers. It provides a brief explanation of the nature of the instrumental and integrative attitudes attributed to the various languages and their speakers. It also examines the nature of language preferences for media discourses by exploring the choice of language(s) preferred by respondents and the reasons for such preferences for listening/watching different programmes in different languages broadcast over radio/television. Further, it explores the self-rated proficiencies of respondents in the language(s), on a five-point scale, specifically, the self-reported knowledge of Urdu in terms of different skills. It also focuses on the intergenerational transmission of languages by exploring the nature of language(s) in which the respondents would like their children to be educated, and to learn as their first and second languages. In addition, it also studies the impact of transmission of languages on linguistic identities. Finally, the chapter analyses the dimensions of linguistic identities, that is, the language with which respondents would like to identify themselves outside and inside Kashmir.

Sociolinguists are familiar with the widely recurring pattern of the majority and the elite holding minority languages or non-standard dialects in disdain, in a given multilingual society. It is rare that prestige is attached to a minority language/dialect or to its speakers. Writers outside academia have asserted the social significance of pride in community languages as well. For example, Anzaldúa has drawn a connection between language pride and linguistic identity, noting, "So, if you really want to hurt me, talk badly about my language. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself" (58-59). Edward King, for

example, wrote in 1875, "The lowland negro of South Carolina has a barbaric dialect. The English words seem to tumble all at once from his mouth and to get sadly mixed whenever he endeavors to speak" (qtd. in Joyner, 196).

In this context, the present chapter seeks to explore the role played by language preferences, that is, attitudinal/motivational endorsements of a given set of languages. Language shift, according to Edwards, often reflects, "a pragmatic desire for social mobility and an improved standard of living" (50). This chapter discusses language attitudes and motivation and their implications for language maintenance and language shift among the Kashmiri speech community. In the present study, 'preference' is used to mean a self-reported choice of language in a particular context, and self-reported proficiency and competencies.

Thus, the chapter discusses the various attitudinal dimensions and features that people attribute to different languages and to their respective speakers. It addresses the issue of how people perceive the importance of language(s) for future purposes such as education, work, and social prestige, and the reasons for preferring to listen to/watch certain programmes broadcast over the radio/television. Finally, it investigates the identities the respondents would like to assert in and out of the state of Kashmir.

## 4.1. Language Attitudes, Preferences, and Motivation

The use of the terms 'attitude' and 'motivation' has varied within the areas of bilingualism and second language acquisition. Crystal (1992) defines language attitudes as "the feelings people have about their own language or the languages of others" (25). Attitudes are usually expressed as favourable or unfavourable. For example, people may or may not be in favour of educating their children in Kashmiri. Investigating language attitudes involves a systematic and critical appraisal of the variety of ways in which people's attitudes to language have been researched internationally, over recent decades.

As far as motivation is concerned, it is a highly complex term intended to explain nothing less than the reasons for a specific behaviour. Because of this ambitious aim, there is no consensus on the definition of the term, though most motivation researchers would agree that it is concerned with the direction and magnitude of human behaviour; that is, with the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it, and the effort put into it.

Language attitudes have also been examined in terms of language preferences, reasons for learning a language, language groups and

communities, uses of language, and parents' language attitudes. Grander and Lambert (1972) classify attitudes under two categories: instrumental and integrative. Instrumental attitudes reflect pragmatic utilitarian motives. These are characterised by a desire to gain social recognition and economic advantages through the knowledge of a certain language. An instrumental attitude to a language is mostly self-oriented and individualistic, and it would seem to have a conceptual overlap with the need for achievement. For Baker (1992), instrumental attitudes exist for vocational reasons, status, achievement, personal success, self-enhancement, or basic security and survival (32). However, an integrative attitude to a language is mostly social and interpersonal in orientation. Such an attitude has conceptual links with the need for affiliation. Nonetheless, Grander and Lambert define it as a desire to be like a representative member of another language community. Thus, an integrative attitude to a particular language may concern an attachment to or identification with a language group of other language speakers, or wanting friendship with that group (Baker; 32). The intensity of the integrative attitude may vary. The specific attitude under investigation may include attitudes to language groups, a language itself, features of a language, uses of a language, cultural and social associations of a language, learning a language, language preferences, and language policy and practice.

Language attitudes are distinguished from other attitudes by the fact that they are specifically about language. Attitudes concerning language or its speakers motivate or de-motivate people towards specific accomplishments, which finally results in language maintenance or shift, which in turn affects linguistic identities. Bhatt (1992) consolidates this by illustrating that "maintenance or shift is indeed a special virtue of the contact situation, to produce types of language attitudes reflecting, by and large, what a particular code accomplishes for the user in terms of status, identity, mobility, and advancement" (56). Such awareness, according to Bhatt, could lead to either language maintenance, characterised by the predominant use of the mother tongue (also referred as the first language) throughout the entire lifetime of the group; or, language shift, where all members of a given mother tongue group come to speak the language of some other group.

Second language (L2) motivation research in the past has made great advances in identifying various motives that affect the successful pursuit of second language acquisition, as well as in specifying various conditions and constraints that shape language learners' motivational disposition. As

far as the sociocultural dimensions of L2 motivation are concerned, they play a significant role in influencing linguistic behaviour.

The present volume attempts to explore the various features respondents correlate with the given set of languages, with an aim to study the possible attitudes and motivational patterns, and their impact on the maintenance and shift of languages.

**Table 4-1 Different Features the Respondents Associate with a Given Set of Languages**

| Features | Kashmiri only | Urdu only | English only | Both Urdu and English | Can't say | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Percent | Number |
| Rich | 10.0 | 19.1 | 30.0 | 24.5 | 16.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Easy to Read | - | 42.7 | 20.9 | 36.4 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Easy to Write | - | 22.7 | 40.0 | 37.3 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Powerful | 7.3 | 12.7 | 51.8 | 20.0 | 8.2 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Prestigious | 8.3 | 14.7 | 46.8 | 17.5 | 12.8 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Difficult | 57.3 | 0.9 | 13.6 | - | 28.2 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Useful | 10.9 | 14.5 | 22.7 | 50.0 | 1.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Scientific | - | - | 86.2 | 9.2 | 4.6 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Literary | 0.9 | 22.0 | 45.0 | 27.5 | 4.6 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Pure | 18.2 | 19.1 | 20.9 | 27.3 | 14.5 | 100.0 | 110 |

Table 4-1 analyses the attitudes respondents hold towards the given set of languages. Based on frequency, the following perceptions are obvious:

| | |
|---|---|
| Kashmiri | Difficult |
| Urdu | Easy to read |
| English | Scientific and powerful |
| Urdu and English | Useful |

As can be seen very clearly, the frequency of respondents who associate richness with Urdu (19.1%) is comparatively more than that for Kashmiri (10.0%). Here, rich is defined in terms of cultural, social, literary, and technical aspects. Nevertheless, it is surprising to note that in such patterns, English dominates overall (30.0%). Being a dominant global language, it has obviously influenced the attitudes of the Kashmiri speech community, just as it has other speech communities around the world. Nonetheless, interestingly, 24.5% of the respondents associate richness

with both Urdu and English. A small percentage of respondents (16.4%) could not associate the feature of richness with any of the given languages. Based on these findings, it is possible to conclude that Kashmiri is not found to be appropriate or rich enough to provide adequate motivation and interest towards the learning and maintenance of it.

As for the difference between different background characteristics like age, gender, and residence, it was found that as age group increases, the frequency for associating richness with Kashmiri increases, such that among lower age groups, the association of richness with the language decreases (see Appendix J). Similarly, among females, a lower percentage (7.4%) associated the feature of richness with Kashmiri, as compared to males (12.5%), whereas for Urdu, the findings showed opposite results. Among residents belonging to different places, it was seen that the frequency of urban residents who associated richness with Kashmiri was higher (12.8%) than that of rural residents (7.9%), which was, once again, opposite as far as the findings for Urdu are concerned.

As discussed in the previous chapter, in reading and writing patterns, Kashmiri stands at the bottom. A surprising picture that consolidates the previous findings emerges from Table 4-1, where not a single response was in favour of the feature of 'easiness' for reading or writing in Kashmiri. Thus, it can be argued that people consider the reading and writing patterns of Kashmiri to be complex and difficult, thus employing other languages (specifically Urdu) for such activities. The table also shows that a significant proportion of people (42.7%) find Urdu easy to read. In this respect, Urdu is followed by a combination of Urdu and English (36.4%). Thus, it is reasonable to interpret that most respondents who are able to read Urdu consider it easier to write in Urdu than in English. A similar picture emerges when it comes to writing, where it was found that those who prefer both Urdu and English (37.3%) follow the proportion favourable to English (40.0%), and then Urdu alone (22.7%). Such figures substantiate the hypothesis of biglossia (as discussed in the previous chapters) in the Kashmiri speech community, where there is a marked distinction in the functional aspects of written and spoken language(s). Similarly, in terms of the languages being 'powerful' and 'prestigious', as usual, Urdu dominates Kashmiri. Thus, it can be pointed out that for the Kashmiri speech community, there is a sense of underlying linguistic pride associated with the Urdu language.

Surprisingly, most respondents (57.3%) asserted that Kashmiri is a difficult language in terms of reading, writing, and other features, compared to other languages. The most prominent reason for this could be the lack of formal teaching in Kashmiri. Interestingly, merely a single

respondent (0.9%) associated the attribute 'difficult' with Urdu, which for English, however, is 13.65%. Nonetheless, 28.2% of the respondents did not associate difficulty with any language. Therefore, it can be summarised that because of its low writing and reading practices, as discussed in the previous chapter, Kashmiri has been projected as a difficult language. The script is not difficult but the attitudes and stereotypes surrounding it are making it appear so. In fact, there are other languages with more than one script, and there are more complex writing systems than the one Kashmiri utlises, but social acceptance, political will, and policy and implementation have rendered them successful for writing and reading purposes.

A careful examination of the results reveals that when asked about the literary language among the given set, surprisingly, only a single (male) respondent associated this feature with Kashmiri, in contrast with 22.0% for Urdu. As far as the features of 'useful' and 'pure' are concerned, the respondents broadly assigned equal values, except for the feature 'scientific', where English dominates significantly (86.2%).

Based on this empirical evidence, it can thus be concluded that Urdu is associated with attitudes that are more positive, and features that are more positive are associated with it than with Kashmiri. The positive perception of such features may be real or based on certain stereotypes. This further illustrates that the community perceives the importance of Urdu on par with that of English. Subsequently, this shapes the motivation towards accepting and accommodating Urdu in broader contexts.

## 4.2. Instrumental Orientation

Researchers working in the area of second language acquisition (SLA) have noted that the reasons for learning a second language vary from immediate utilitarian purposes to social prestige. Many researchers, such as Dornyei (1990), Shaaban and Ghaith (2000), and Warden and Lin (2000), highlight the significance of the utilitarian dimension of L2 motivation. "In the extreme, this might involve complete identification with the community (and possibly even withdrawal from one's original group)..." (Gardner; 5). However, for Dornyei et al., besides integrativeness, instrumentality has been the other most frequently highlighted variable in L2 motivation research. This refers to "the perceived pragmatic benefits of L2 proficiency and provides the greatest driving force to learn the language..." (12). In other words, instrumental orientation subsumes utilitarian goals like receiving a better job or higher salary because of mastering a second language.

'Orientations', in Gardner's terminology, involve the reasons behind learning an L2; more precisely, they "represent ultimate goals for achieving the more immediate goal of learning the second language" (11). Gardner's integrative orientation not only "stresses an emotional involvement with the other community" but also "reflects a positive non-ethnocentric approach to the other community" (133–134). However, Gardner (1985) proposes instrumentality strictly as a type of orientation rather than motivation; that is, as a reason/goal for L2 learning. Nonetheless, researchers have highlighted the importance of the utilitarian dimension of L2 motivation. At the same time, in some other studies, no clear-cut instrumental dimension emerges. For example, in the studies by Clément et al. (1994), Dornyei (2002), and Dornyei and Kormos (2000), the items measuring traditional utilitarian values attached to the instrumental dimension of L2 learning (receiving better jobs or a higher salary, etc.), loaded onto a factor that also subsumed other incentives (travelling, making foreign friends, etc.).

**Table 4-2 Language Preference for various Purposes**

| Purposes | Language(s) | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri | Urdu | English | Both Urdu and English | Percent | Number |
| Education | - | 5.5 | 48.2 | 46.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Securing Jobs | - | 5.5 | 63.6 | 30.9 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Professional Purposes | 0.9 | 7.3 | 57.8 | 33.9 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Religious Purposes | 10.9 | 31.8 | 1.8 | 55.5 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Social Prestige/ Status | 11.8 | 40.9 | 30.2 | 17.1 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Travel | 0.9 | 28.2 | 20.0 | 50.9 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Reading | - | 20.9 | 28.2 | 50.9 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Writing | - | 17.3 | 32.7 | 50.0 | 100.0 | 110 |

Table 4-2 represents the use(s) respondents believe each language meets, reflecting the instrumental purposes that motivate people towards certain languages. An analysis and interpretation of the data clearly reveals that none of the respondents considers the Kashmiri language useful or important for the future, for educational and professional purposes and for

securing jobs. For securing jobs and for travelling, English is perceived as the most important language. Such instrumental attitudes play a significant role in the maintenance or shift of a language. Since the data clearly indicates that people do not perceive Kashmiri to be of any use in terms of the given instrumental purposes, there is likely an absence of motivation for its maintenance. These observations were consolidated in a qualitative interview conducted by the researcher/author. The interviewee, a middle school headmaster, wondered: "What is the use of a language if it can't help us reshape our future and promise economic security? ... All those people who advocate for Kashmiri culture and language never teach their own children Kashmiri; it is a hidden ideology to encourage other people to use Kashmiri so that they do not prosper or compete." In section 4.7.3, it was established that most people do not understand Arabic. Therefore, Urdu is the alternative language preferred for the purposes of religious discourses and for the understanding of sacred religious scriptures.

Based on the data, it is interesting to note that Urdu is perceived as a symbol of social prestige/status. Table 4-2 shows that 40.9% associate social prestige with Urdu, vis-à-vis English (30.2%) and Kashmiri (11.8%).

Knowing the language of the area one would like to travel to is considered an asset. Those, who know neither the language nor any common lingua franca of the area they wish to travel to, face great difficulties. Being aware of such a situation, that Kashmiri is not spoken outside Kashmir, almost none of the respondents consider Kashmiri useful for travelling purposes. On the other hand, because of its mutual intelligibility with Hindi, which is spoken in most parts of India, 28.2% of the respondents consider Urdu an important language for travelling purposes. However, nearly half of the respondents (50.0%) consider both English and Urdu useful for travelling. As discussed in the previous sections, none of the respondents considers Kashmiri suitable for reading and writing purposes. On the other hand, 29.9% consider Urdu a useful language for reading and 17.3% for writing. It may be noted that half of the respondents perceive both Urdu and English to be useful for the purposes of reading and writing.

It is important to note the differences in perception of Urdu, Kashmiri, and English. Interestingly, people are increasingly taking up the study of English as a part of their education, as well as for other instrumental reasons. Although they have positive attitudes towards everything that is associated with English, it is a form of instrumental motivation, whereas for Urdu, it is emotional and integrative as well. For Kashmiri, it is more symbolic reification than instrumental (witnessed by the low instrumental

score). Positive attitudes towards one language come at the expense of another; Urdu attracts additional positive attitudes at the expense of Kashmiri.

As observed above, the general tendency of decline in the various language attitudes towards Kashmiri is striking, given that it will have due impact on the sustenance of Kashmiri identity. However, Urdu has attained more importance due to its relationship with various significant functional purposes. Thus, it can be concluded that the perception of Kashmiri is negative in the community, whereas that of Urdu is very positive. Such perceptions significantly reshape the collective attitudes of a community towards certain codes, which in turn proves to be a major cause of convergence and divergence.

## 4.3. Attitudes towards the Community/Speakers of a Language

The motivation to learn another community's language is not an individual motivation. It is strongly related to the social attitudes prevailing in the learner's community concerning the target language and towards the sociocultural 'baggage', it carries. Attitudes towards the speakers/community of a given language have been a central component in Gardner's motivation theory. Using a socio-psychological approach, Gardner asserted that success in language learning is a function of the learner's positive attitudes towards the linguistic and cultural community of the target language. This was in accordance with Spolsky's (1969) conclusion that one of the most important attitudinal factors affecting L2 acquisition is the learner's attitude towards the language and its speakers.

Gardner (1985) presented a review of several studies conducted in varied contexts that led to the inference that the attitudes towards the members of the L2 community were indeed key constituents of the L2 motivation construct, and accordingly, almost all past studies on L2 motivation have included a salient component focusing on such attitudes.

As illustrated in the previous sections, the attitudinal endorsements of Urdu are significantly positive in contrast to Kashmiri. Similar results are revealed when the data for the perceptions of different linguistic communities (that is, speakers of different languages) are analysed.

**Table 4-3 Characteristics Associated with the Speakers of Certain Languages**

| Characteristics | Kashmiri | Urdu | English | All | Can't say | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Percent | Number |
| Polite | 19.1 | 18.2 | 13.6 | 32.7 | 16.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Friendly | 25.5 | 16.4 | 16.4 | 30.0 | 11.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Civilised | 12.7 | 20.7 | 35.5 | 21.1 | 10.0 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Superior | 8.2 | 15.5 | 52.7 | 12.7 | 10.9 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Educated | 0.9 | 27.3 | 50.0 | 20.0 | 1.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Uncultured | 20.0 | 3.6 | 3.6 | - | 72.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Honest | 16.4 | 19.1 | 16.4 | 20.9 | 27.3 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Rich | 6.4 | 12.7 | 44.5 | 23.6 | 12.7 | 100.0 | 110 |

The table shows that not only do people have positive attitudes towards Urdu and English but that their favourable perception extends to the speakers of these languages. Thus, while Kashmiri-speaking people figure more often among the 'uncultured', English-speaking people are presumed to be more civilised, educated, superior, and rich. It may be added here that this perception is not unique to the state of Jammu and Kashmiri. In other states of India too, indigenous speakers are considered traditional and backward and English speakers are considered contemporary and worldly. In Kashmir, between Kashmiri and English speakers, there is another category of people—those who speak Urdu—who are considered more advanced than Kashmiri-speaking people but far behind than English speakers. Nevertheless, it is interesting to observe the results given in Table 4-3, which show that there are two attributes that a higher number of respondents associate with Kashmiri as compared to Urdu, these are, being polite and friendly.

Based on this evidence, it can be summarised that people not only have positive attitudes and perception towards Urdu vis-à-vis Kashmiri but that they also perceive the speakers of Urdu as significantly superior and more positive than Kashmiri speakers. Since the perceptions and attitudes towards a language have practical implications for motivating people to maintain or shift from one language to another, for the Kashmiri speech community, such perceptions and beliefs are going to have a crucial impact on the maintenance of Kashmiri language and identity.

## 4.4. Language Preferences for Media Discourses

Media discourses play an important role in shaping and reshaping the language attitudes of a speech community. These days, the media, including the newspaper, radio, and television, have become an integral part of human life. The media has been influencing various social, cultural, economic and religious aspects of society. The language of media discourse is often considered the standard for daily communication. For instance, the variety of English spoken by the BBC radio/television is considered the standard form of British English.

As described in the previous chapter, media discourses play a vital role in shaping and reshaping the perceptions, beliefs, worldview, and attitudes of people. The present section examines the language preferences of the respondents for various programmes broadcast over radio/television.

As in other parts of the world, cable television has also influenced the collective thinking of the Kashmiri community, with a broadcast of approximately seventy-two 24-hour television channels. However, Koul (2005) observes that "the Kashmiri language is not used adequately in education, administration, and mass media in the Kashmir Valley" (87). In the present study, the respondents were asked to state their preferences for the various programmes broadcast over television and the radio. An analysis of the responses, as shown in Table 4-4, indicates that Urdu dominates such preferences, in general. Due to the prevailing circumstances of the last two decades, people who were keen to find out the news around the world switched to Urdu news channels, broadcast from independent sources such as the BBC Urdu and the Voice of America. The people were of the opinion that Indian and Pakistani News channels do not provide an objective report of the facts, whereas the BBC Urdu Service and the Voice of America provide factual reporting without any exaggeration, prejudice, and partiality. Table 4-4 clearly shows that in contrast to other languages, most respondents prefer to listen to/watch Urdu News. In the summer of 2008 (due to the Amaranth land transfer controversy), to maintain law and order and to control any mass agitation, the state government banned local news channels from showing the news. In such a situation, the people switched to the BBC Urdu service to know what was going on in the state. Surprisingly, the local cable television channels in Kashmir telecast news reports and programmes in Urdu more than they do in Kashmiri. The time slots allotted for airing Kashmiri programmes are far fewer than those for Urdu programmes are. It is notable that a fair amount of code-mixing (Urdu-Kashmiri) occurs while broadcasting programmes in Kashmiri. As far as music and songs are concerned, keeping in mind the growing market

**Table 4-4 Language(s) Preferred for Listening to/Watching the Radio/TV**

| Programmes | Languages Preferred | | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri only | Urdu only | English only | Kashmiri and Urdu | Urdu and English | Others | Percent | Number |
| News | 10.9 | 30.3 | 5.5 | 20.2 | 21.8 | 11.3 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Songs and Music | 19.4 | 16.7 | 5.6 | 37.0 | 10.2 | 11.1 | 100.0 | 108 |
| Movies | 0.9 | 50.9 | 2.8 | - | 27.8 | 17.6 | 100.0 | 108 |
| Serials | 8.2 | 41.8 | 0.9 | 32.7 | 10.0 | 7.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Discussions | 10.9 | 13.6 | 15.5 | 17.3 | 21.8 | 20.9 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Commentaries | 1.8 | 22.7 | 19.1 | 8.2 | 44.5 | 4.7 | 100.0 | 110 |

for Urdu/Hindi songs, some Kashmiri singers have starting singing in Urdu/Hindi too.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Bollywood has also played a significant part in the sustenance and growth of Urdu in Kashmir. Strange as it may seem, there are hardly any movies in Kashmiri. As can be seen from Table 4-4, none of the respondents (excluding one) prefers watching movies in Kashmiri, whereas half of them prefer watching movies in Urdu (Hindustani). Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that Kashmiris can easily comprehend the language employed in Bollywood cinema (Hindustani) and consider Hindi movies to be Urdu movies, because the languages are mutually intelligible. Similar is the case with serials telecast over cable network channels such as STAR Plus, Sony Entertainment, and Zee TV. It is worthwhile to point out that such non-Kashmiri programmes and channels have had a crucial impact on Kashmiri programmes and channels, such that people tend to neglect Kashmiri programmes. The radio is an important mass medium in Kashmir. In this context, the role of Radio Kashmir Srinagar—the important media institution of Kashmir in the development of Kashmiri language and literature—cannot be undermined. It used to broadcast programmes in Kashmiri, including songs, news bulletins, and other programmes. However, it was also influenced by the status of the Urdu language. For example, during the Muslim holy month of *Ramadan* (month of fasting for Muslims), Radio Kashmir, which used to broadcast religious programmes in Kashmiri during *saheri* (eating before dawn) now broadcasts such programmes in Urdu. It is surprising to note that as with movies, here too, the majority of respondents (41.8%) reported a preference for watching serials in Urdu, which, like the movies, are actually in Hindustani.

Of the several channels, the most important one is *DD Kashir*, a Kashmiri language satellite channel supported by Doordarshan studios in Srinagar, Jammu, and Leh. It was launched in 2003 and it telecasts everything from entertainment serials to infotainment programmes, news and current affairs, social and cultural programmes, and Hindi movies. *DD Kashir* is available to 96 % of the population of the valley. It used to be operated from Delhi, but in the year 2006, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Government of India decided to shift the operations of the channel from Delhi to Srinagar, after more than seventeen years of the outbreak of the separatist movement in Kashmir in the late 1980s. *DD Kashir* had already become a 24-hour channel from August 15, 2000. Earlier, it used to telecast a 14.5-hour programme daily. Another 4.5 hours were taken up by in-house and news/current affairs programmes. The remaining 4 hours were devoted to archival programmes. Special audience

programmes covered Gojri, Pahari, Ladakhi, Dogri, Shina, Balti, Pushtu, Bhadarwahi, and Punjabi audiences. The channel also showed broadcasts of verses from famous Kashmiri Sufi poets such as Sheikh Noor-ud-Deen and Lal Ded, but translated them into Urdu, as most people do not comprehend the lexicon employed in the verses. Interestingly, *DD Kashir* telecasts Kashmiri-Urdu bilingual serials. It also telecasts documentaries in Urdu with casting in Kashmiri, Urdu, and English. It is significant to note that *DD Kashir* employs Perso-Arabic script for the Kashmiri language.

In continuation of the above table, the present study also illustrates the reasons for the preferences mentioned for certain languages. Table 4-5 shows a frequency distribution of the respondents' preferences for watching TV programmes in different languages.

**Table 4-5 Reported Reasons for Preference for Different Languages while Listening to/Watching Radio/Television Programmes**

| Reasons for Preference | Programmes Broadcast Over Radio/Television | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri Only | Urdu only | English Only | Urdu, English and others* | Percent | Number |
| Enjoy them more | 30.9 | 27.7 | 3.6 | 37.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Find then informative | 3.6 | 14.5 | 37.3 | 44.5 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Understand them better | 17.3 | 25.5 | 3.6 | 53.6 | 100.0 | 110 |
| They have a wider coverage | 6.4 | 23.6 | 42.7 | 27.3 | 100.0 | 110 |
| They are better in quality | 8.3 | 22.0 | 31.2 | 68.8 | 100.0 | 109 |
| They help in learning language | 3.6 | 10.0 | 44.5 | 41.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| They are more educative | 0.9 | 17.3 | 41.8 | 40.0 | 100.0 | 110 |
| They are more entertaining | 27.3 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 45.4 | 100.0 | 110 |

**Others mainly include a mixture of Hindi and Kashmiri*

So far, the picture has been unambiguous that there are additional positive perceptions associated with Urdu. An analysis of preferences also shows that, largely, Urdu dominates most of the reasons for why a particular programme is preferred. Table 4-5 clearly shows that the frequency of respondents who find Urdu programmes informative is more (14.5%) than those who report the same for Kashmiri (3.6%). Further, 22.2% asserted that they prefer the programmes in Urdu, English, and other languages, because they find them more informative. Hence, it can be ascertained that though they consider it in combination with other languages such as English, most respondents associate the feature of 'informative' with Urdu, more than with the other languages mentioned. Similarly, with respect to understanding the programmes, a larger number of respondents support Urdu (25.5%). Interestingly, the frequency of respondents who reported understanding English programmes better than those in other languages is very low (3.6%), which clearly indicates that not many people in Kashmir understand English very well. English, at the level of comprehension, is still far from Urdu and other languages such as Hindi, though in the aspects of reading and writing, it dominates over Hindi because of the issues with its script. It is worth noting that the percentage of respondents who report a better understanding of Kashmiri programmes is lower (17.3%) than that for Urdu programmes (25.5%). The possible reason for this could be that people have now become more accustomed to Urdu and cannot understand the Kashmiri lexicon, idiomatic expressions, and phrases all that well.

As far as preferences for the coverage of programmes are concerned, a greater percentage of respondents (23.6%) feel that Urdu programmes have wider coverage (that is, they cover larger areas and events) than Kashmiri programmes do (6.4%). They believe that programmes in Kashmiri are confined mostly to local events. A respondent, while acknowledging this, said, "ETV Urdu covers events and news from all Indian states, and abroad, which however, is not the case with indigenous channels". Similarly, the preference for Urdu programmes is mainly because they are of better quality and they help learn Urdu oral skills. The data illustrates that none of the respondents (barring one) considers Kashmiri programmes educative, whereas as many as 17.3% of the respondents consider Urdu programmes to be so.

To sum up, it can be said that there are many positive and practical reasons for the preference for Urdu programmes on the radio/television, which in turn explains the more favourable attitudes towards Urdu vis-à-vis Kashmiri. It also substantiates the fact that media discourses play a significant role in shaping and reshaping the language attitudes of speech

communities and consequently their motivation to change the language roles of their speech community.

## 4.5. Attitudes and Self-Rated Proficiencies

Self-rated proficiencies are primarily subjective judgments of language skills and are not the same as objective ratings obtained through language testing techniques. Research shows that self-rated proficiencies covertly determine language attitudes. Self-rated proficiencies have been used in studies of prestige, jobs, economic benefits, language of the elite, powerful groups, etc. Galbonton and Trofimovich (2008) illustrated that there is a complex relationship between identity variables and L2 proficiency. They showed that a group of Quebec Francophones' sense of belonging and loyalty to their primary group (Quebecois) and to a target language group (English speakers) had both positive and negative consequences for the level of English proficiency attained. Participants with a strong sense of identification with their primary ethno-linguistic group and their target language group had significantly higher levels of proficiency in English than those who showed only strong identification with their primary group. Table 4-6 illustrates the ratings respondents gave for a given set of languages on a five-point scale.

**Table 4-6 Respondents' Rating of Languages**

| Languages | Rating | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very Good | Good | Average | Poor | Very Poor | Percent | Number |
| Kashmiri | 46.4 | 40.0 | 8.2 | 4.5 | 0.9 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Urdu | 30.9 | 61.8 | 7.3 | - | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| English | 59.1 | 25.5 | 14.5 | - | 0.9 | 100.0 | 110 |

Nonetheless, it is important to note that sometimes, actual language behaviour may not coincide with reported language attitudes and self-rated proficiencies. At times, it would be mere symbolic reification than actual language use, where, for instance, a person claims: "I like Kashmiri; it is my mother tongue, but I do not use it". As has been shown by a committee on Irish attitudes, most Irish people value their language as a symbol of national/ethnic identity or as a symbol of cultural distinctiveness, but they do not actually use the language. Similar findings were observed here (Table 4-6), in which 46.4% of the respondents rated the Kashmiri language as a very good one. However, the actual language behaviour of the community contrasts with such findings, as clearly described in the

previous chapter. However, it is pertinent to highlight that whereas some respondents (5.4%) rated Kashmiri as poor or very poor, nobody reported similarly with respect to Urdu.

**Table 4-7 Self-Rated Proficiency of the Respondents in the Language(s) on a Five-Point Scale**

| Languages | Proficiency in the Languages | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very Good | Good | Moderate | Very Little | Nil | Percent | Number |
| Kashmiri | 35.5 | 40.0 | 20.9 | 3.6 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Urdu | 39.1 | 50.9 | 9.1 | 0.9 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| English | 22.7 | 36.4 | 26.4 | 11.8 | 2.7 | 100.0 | 110 |

The ratings on a five-point scale regarding language proficiency indicate that an overwhelmingly large percentage of the respondents reported having very good (39.1%) and good (50.9%) skills in Urdu. However, only 22.7% rated themselves 'very good' and 36.4% 'good' in English. The case of Kashmiri is somewhere in between. It supports the findings of the previous chapter, where a higher number of respondents claimed to have skills in Urdu than in any other language.

**Table 4-8 Self-Reported Knowledge of Urdu in Terms of the Following Skills**

| Skills | Knowledge of Urdu Skills | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very Good | Good | Moderate | Very Little | Nil | Percent | Number |
| Under-standing | 81.8 | 17.3 | 0.9 | - | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Speaking | 65.5 | 28.2 | 6.4 | - | - | 110.0 | 110 |
| Reading | 60.0 | 31.8 | 6.4 | 1.8 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Writing | 53.6 | 30.9 | 12.7 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 100.0 | 110 |

As discussed earlier (Table 3-2), most respondents reported having all skills in Urdu. Table 4-8 demonstrates that Urdu is a language that is understood well by the respondents; 81.8% report a very good understanding of it, and 17.3% report a good understanding of it. In addition, almost all the respondents can speak, read, and write in Urdu. Thus, the analysis presents a positive picture of the self-reported knowledge of skills in Urdu.

**Table 4-9 Self-Reported Knowledge of Kashmiri in Terms of the Following Skills**

| Skills | Knowledge of the Kashmiri Skills | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very Good | Good | Moderate | Very Little | Nil | Percent | Number |
| Under-standing | 81.8 | 17.3 | 0.9 | - | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Speaking | 65.5 | 28.2 | 6.4 | - | - | 110.0 | 110 |
| Reading | 60.0 | 31.8 | 6.4 | 1.8 | - | 100.0 | 110 |
| Writing | 53.6 | 30.9 | 12.7 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 100.0 | 110 |

The data shows that what is true about Urdu is not so about Kashmiri. Table 4-9 indicates that all the respondents understand Kashmiri and can speak the language too but that they cannot read or write in it. Writing skills in Kashmiri are particularly poor. The percentage of respondents who have very little or no writing skills in Kashmiri is as high as 72.7%.

However, quite surprisingly, it was also found that very close to half of the respondents (see Appendix K) acknowledged that they feel socially inferior while speaking Kashmiri, whereas none of the respondents reported feeling inferior while speaking Urdu.

Thus, the analysis of the self-rated proficiencies provides strong evidence for the fact that as of today, Urdu dominates Kashmiri, and that subsequently, this may result in a loss of popularity for Kashmiri in symbolic as well as communicative aspects. Hence, it can be concluded that Kashmiri is going through a dynamic process of linguistic acculturation and that its speakers have been losing self-confidence in using their native language.

## 4.6. Intergenerational Transmission of Languages

A difference between the language proficiency of older and younger generations has already been described. The analysis shows that younger generations are better acquainted with Urdu than are older generations. Expressing his apprehensions, a Kashmiri speaker writes in a newspaper:

> The Kashmiri language is our asset. We are being deprived of our language, and it is all because of our parents, who wanted their children to speak in Urdu and in English, from the very beginning. However, this is a wrong approach. If a child is allowed to speak in Kashmiri in the initial stages, then he will himself learn English and Urdu subsequently, as he has to study them afterwards. It has been rightly pointed out that 'if you want

to destroy a nation, deprive its people of their language' (*The Greater Kashmir*).

As already noted, intergenerational transmission may be viewed as the key component of and primary reason for the maintenance of a language. However, there are two patterns of this, where the intergenerational transmission of a language occurs mainly for instrumental purposes and for integrative purposes.

The present study (Table 4-10) looks at the language(s) in which parents want their children to receive their education, and languages they would want them to learn as their first and second languages.

**Table 4-10 Languages in which the Respondents would Like their Children to be Educated**

| Language(s) for Educating Children | Total | |
|---|---|---|
| | Percent | Number |
| Kashmiri only | 0.9 | 1 |
| Urdu only | 9.0 | 10 |
| English only | 11.8 | 13 |
| Both Urdu and English | 31.8 | 35 |
| Urdu, English and others* | 46.4 | 51 |
| Total | 100.0 | 110 |

**Mainly Hindi, Arabic, and Punjabi*

It is evident from the data that only a single respondent wants to educate his/her children in Kashmiri, in contrast to Urdu, in which 9.0% of the respondents wanted to educate their children. Similarly, keeping in mind the importance of Urdu-English bilingualism, 31.8% of the respondents opted to educate their children in both Urdu and English. Preferring multilingualism, a larger proportion of the respondents (46.4%) wished to educate their children in multiple languages, including Urdu, English, Hindi, and Arabic. The interesting and surprising observation made from this analysis is that respondents do not see any future for those educated in Kashmiri alone. "What will we get out of the Kashmiri language and culture, and what is the need for a language which stops your growth?" contended one respondent.

Thus, it is reasonable to remark that Kashmiris evaluate the Kashmiri language as an impediment to their children's growth and development, whereas Urdu and English are perceived as symbols of prestige and as tools for upward movement. It is a well-recognised fact that language is a

part of symbolic capital and a tool for progress and upward social movement.

In sum, respondents perceive Kashmiri to be traditional and non-functional, whereas Urdu and English are seen as languages of social upliftment and growth. This explains why there is greater acceptance of English and Urdu as compulsory codes. It is important to specify here that even though English is preferred for various developmental purposes, Urdu still takes precedence over Kashmiri and Hindi. Urdu is preferred over Kashmiri as it is seen to perform both integrative and instrumental functions. English is mainly used for instrumental reasons, whereas Kashmiri is used only for symbolic reasons.

As discussed in the first chapter, the first language plays an important role in skill development as well as in identity formation. Therefore, in addition to the language in which the respondents want their children to be educated, another two questions were asked in order to explore which languages they wanted their children to learn as first and second languages, and the reasons for this. Fig. 4.1 shows the frequency distribution of the responses to these questions.

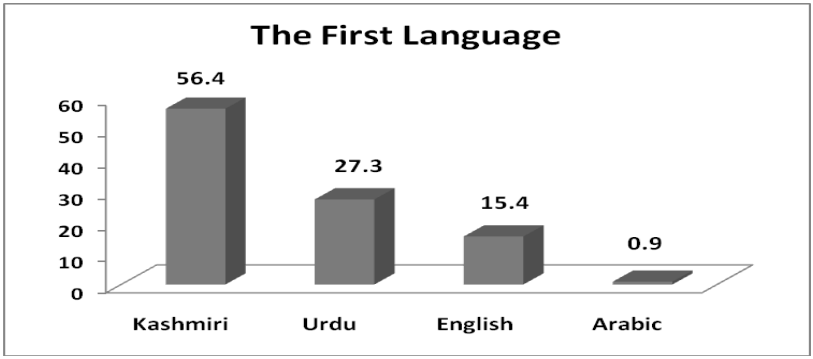



Fig. 4-1 The language the respondents would like their children to learn as their first language

It is evident from the figure that more than half of the respondents want Kashmiri to be their children's first language. Since Kashmiri is their native language, with its associated affiliations, this result is not surprising. What is interesting though is that more than a quarter of the respondents preferred Urdu as the first language, despite it not being their native tongue. Moreover, 15.4% selected English as the first language for their children. It is significant to point out that these results are in contrast

with the findings from actual language usage and attitudinal patterns. Therefore, the results of the respondents who would like their children to learn Kashmiri as the first language is more a matter of reification, limited to dreaming; actual language behaviour is in contrast to such wishes.

The reasons for choosing certain languages varied among the respondents. For most of the respondents who opted for Kashmiri as their children's first language, the reason was that it is their mother tongue. Some were concerned about the endangered position of the Kashmiri language. One respondent, while wishing that his children learned Kashmiri as their first language, said: "Kashmiri is on the verge of extinction, so we would like to save our language". Interestingly, some of the rural respondents, whose older generations are not literate, were concerned about the communication gap between their parents and their children. They said that they would like their children to learn Kashmiri because "it would help them communicate with their elders, who can only communicate in Kashmiri". A woman respondent favouring the learning of Kashmiri was more interested in saving her "culture and tradition". Some of the respondents who were afraid of losing their identity emphasised that they would like their children to learn Kashmiri as their first language "because this language will keep their identity alive". Yet, for a significant percentage of the respondents, the association with Urdu culture through Urdu language is very strong and positive.

It is evident from Figure 4.1 that 27.3% of the respondents said that they would like their children to learn Urdu as their first language. Interestingly, most of the respondents who opted for this were of the opinion that it is spoken in other states of India too. For example, one of them said: "I would like my children to learn Urdu as their first language because it'll enable them to communicate with people from other states of India as well". Surprisingly, there were diverse reasons given by the respondents for preferring Urdu, including integrative and instrumental ones. Some respondents cited reading and writing, and said, "It will be easy for children to read and write in Urdu; most books are available in it, and no book is available in the Kashmiri language". These remarks are congruent with the findings of the actual language behaviour of the speech community and the interlingual Kashmiri-Urdu diglossic situation.

Some people, who consider Urdu culture superior, and said that "Urdu is a pure and cultural language. Our children will learn a rich culture by learning Urdu as their first language". Some respondents, being aware of the medium of education and thus preferring Urdu, remarked that "it will help them communicate with classmates in modern English and Urdu medium schools". Another respondent reasoned that Urdu is considered

socially superior in Kashmir. This reinforces the findings given in Table 4-3. Some respondents touched upon economic aspects, saying, "It is a good language, and all good and economically well-off people speak it". This shows that while both integrative and instrumental reasons support the choice for Urdu as the first language, only symbolic reasons support Kashmiri.

Interestingly, Figure 5.1 elucidates that 15.4% of the respondents say that they would like their children to learn English as their first language. As with Urdu, there were diverse reasons for this. The most common reason for choosing English was its global appeal. For example, one of the respondents remarked that "it is the most popular language used throughout the world. It is a storehouse of knowledge, is easy to learn, and has scientific value. Further, it is rich, powerful, and is the medium of education in all modern English medium schools. Also, every important book is published in English". Thus, it can be said that the reasons for preferring English as the first language are instrumental and utilitarian. Nevertheless, it is surprising to note that one respondent opted for Arabic as the first language, for the simple reason that "it is a divine language".

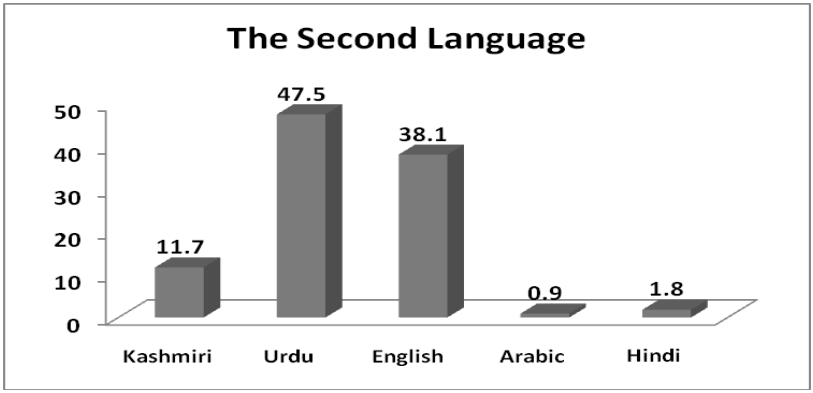



Fig. 4-2 The language the respondents would like their children to learn as their second language.

Figure 4.2 exhibits the frequency of the languages the respondents would like their children to learn as their second language. Interestingly, 11.7% of the respondents opted for Kashmiri, providing several reasons for this. One respondent commented that "people send their children mostly to Urdu or English medium schools. None among the new generation knows people like Mahjoor, Haba Khatoon, Shamus Fakeer,

Rasool Mir, etc. and their contributions to the Kashmiri language". The other reasons provided by respondents included Kashmiri's mother tongue affiliation and its endangered future.

Interestingly, the response patterns for preferring Urdu as the second language typically correspond to the findings of the actual language behaviour of the speech community. Figure 5-2 shows that the highest percentage (47.5%) of respondents cited Urdu as the second language they would like their children to learn, with diverse reasons for this, varying from integrative to instrumental. For example, one respondent said, "Urdu is the language of philosophy, modernity, and spiritualism". However, most respondents consider it the language of wider communication, spoken in other states of India. While associating it with Muslim religious identity, a few respondents stated that "Urdu is in practice in most states of the country, and this language is the language of religion among the people". One respondent, while acknowledging the importance of Urdu in the social setting of the Kashmiri speech community, asserted, "Kashmir has been under the influence of Urdu since the time of the Persian rulers. Therefore, this language has entered the social life of Kashmir, and it is this language that is used most in the state". Consolidating the previous findings on the language of education, the reason some respondents gave for their choice centered on the importance of Urdu in education: "It will help the children at the school level, and they can communicate with their teachers, classmates, and others more easily in Urdu. Moreover, most newspapers and other literature are available in Urdu". Nevertheless, several respondents prefer it because it is the official language of the state, and they argued, "Kashmiri is difficult for children to learn, whereas Urdu is used in the education system and is a rich language".

Because of its integrative and utilitarian dimensions, several respondents preferred English as the second language they would like their children to learn. As can be seen in Figure 4-2, English (38.1%) follows Urdu (47.5%) in the frequency of respondents selecting it as the second language for their children. Most of the respondents who prefer English as the second language, favor it for its universal appeal as the global lingua franca and for other utilitarian purposes like jobs, business, education, and travel. To quote a respondent:

> *I would prefer English, because even at the school level, many of the books are written in English, and in modern times, more people are inclined towards English. English is a rich language; this language can help children cope with the challenges of the future. These days, all the latest scientific, medical terms used are in English. There is hardly any magazine or standard paper available in Kashmiri that can fulfill all the needs of our*

*future generation. Therefore, it is time for the state government to reconsider the policy of education and give more emphasis to English. Then only can we overcome poverty and ignorance.*

Several respondents associate power and prestige with English. Some consider it a marker of identity on the global stage.

Surprisingly, one respondent opted for Arabic as the second language. He would like his children to learn it for the simple reason that "it is better for this world and hereafter". Figure 5.1 shows that 1.8% of the respondents opted for Hindi as the second language for their children. The main reason was that "it is our national/official language and is used vastly outside Kashmir". It may be added that only those respondents opted for Hindi who have been outside the state; specifically, in the Hindi-speaking states.

In summary, the data shows that the reasons for choosing a language other than Kashmiri are multiple (status, power, integrative, normative and utilitarian), whereas the reasons for choosing Kashmiri are only integrative and symbolic. For Urdu specifically, the reasons are both integrative as well as instrumental.

## 4.7. Assertion of Identities

A detailed description of the linguistic assertion of identities and of the language-identity linkage has been discussed in the first chapter. The noted sociolinguist Andrée Tabouret-Keller said, "The language spoken by somebody and his or her identity as a speaker of this language are inseparable" (316). A native or first language fosters a sense of belonging to a group; when one is born and raised locally, one typically speaks the local language. Speakers recognise other members of the group who they do not know personally through their (common) speech, besides a number of other potential factors such as their manner of dressing or physical features. Speech patterns serve to identify 'others' as much as 'own', and people expect the 'other' group to use the same strategy. Tabouret-Keller argues that "linguistic identities are dynamic and are often the outcome of an individual process of identity construction" (316). The willingness to communicate in a language comprises a host of variables, including subjective norms, contact, linguistic confidence, and identity. The linguistic assertion of identity is sometimes based on an 'ideal imagined community', that is, speakers consider themselves members of an imagined community whose members they may not have even seen and whose mental construction is based on their imagination. Nevertheless, it is difficult to envisage that one could possibly develop a potent ideal

imagined community speaking its own language, while at the same time despising the people speaking the same language.

Focused mainly on linguistic identities, the study did not attempt to elicit direct statements from respondents regarding linguistic identities. Such an approach may only reflect a symbolic and group affiliation that would constitute a rationalisation of the practices, rather than a reflection of real assertion of linguistic identity. Nevertheless, the researcher asked the respondents one such question about the kind of linguistic identity they would like to assert in and out of Kashmir.

**Table 4-11 How Respondents Would Like to Identify Themselves Outside Kashmir**

| Identify out of Kashmir as | Always | Sometimes | Never | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Percent | Number |
| Kashmiri Speaker | 10.0 | 47.3 | 42.7 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Urdu Speaker | 71.8 | 26.4 | 1.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| English Speaker | 8.2 | 80.0 | 11.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Punjabi Speaker | - | 30.9 | 69.1 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Hindi Speaker | 3.6 | 47.3 | 49.1 | 100.0 | 110 |

The table shows that only 10.0% of the respondents would like to present themselves as Kashmiri speakers outside Kashmir, and 42.7% reported that they would never like to be identified as Kashmiri speakers outside Kashmir. As observed in the responses to the first/second language choice for their children, most respondents agreed that Kashmiri is not being used outside the state, whereas Urdu is used in most parts of India. Because of such response patterns and the several positive connotations associated with Urdu, 71.8% and 26.4% of the respondents want to be identified outside the state as Urdu speakers all of the time and some of the time, respectively. Interestingly, 8.2% asserted that they would always like to be identified as English speakers, and 80% want this sometimes. Ironically, 30.9% of the respondents reported that they would sometimes like to be identified outside the state as Punjabi speakers. Some respondents want to be identified as a Hindi speaker sometimes, as this too would raise their chances of easy assimilation outside the state. Interestingly, since the onset of the separatist movement in Kashmir, most Kashmiris who visit other states of India do not like to identify as Kashmiri because of the harassment and questioning they often face from various security agencies. Keeping such apprehensions in mind, one respondent strongly asserted, “I would never like to be identified as a

Kashmiri speaker and would always speak Hindi outside the state, even with a Kashmiri speaker, otherwise people may wonder if I'm a militant".

Nevertheless, it is to be kept in mind that a wish to be identified with a language is different from one's actual language behaviour, and linguistic identity is asserted mostly through communicative practices than through reification. In this case, the preference for Urdu manifests in actual language behaviour as well as in the identification process, whereas the preference for other languages mostly reflects reification rather than actual communicative processes. In other words, it seems increasingly clear that in certain contexts, speakers construct the imagined linguistic identity of a community not because of they are native speakers of a language but because of other non-native speakers who use the language mainly for prestige, commerce, assimilation, and other utilitarian purposes.

**Table 4-12 How Respondents Would Like to Identify Themselves Within Kashmir**

| Identify in Kashmir as | Always | Sometimes | Never | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Percent | Number |
| Kashmiri Speaker | 87.3 | 10.9 | 1.8 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Urdu Speaker | 8.2 | 87.3 | 4.5 | 100.0 | 110 |
| English Speaker | 4.5 | 79.1 | 16.4 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Punjabi Speaker | - | 10.9 | 89.1 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Hindi Speaker | - | 38.2 | 61.8 | 100.0 | 110 |

The identity of Kashmiris inside Kashmir is different. Locally, all the people are Kashmiris. They are typically not aware of any micro-linguistic variations and changes across generations; yet, these phenomena contribute to the linguistic identity of the population. On the other hand, the people are certainly aware of linguistic acts such as developing linguistic pride, lyrics, and traditional songs and of the linguistic labels for outsiders and insiders in the community. Table 4-12 depicts that 87.3% wished to be identified always as Kashmiri speakers in Kashmir. There could be two possible reasons for asserting such affiliation. One, it is the marker of belongingness to a distinct community in India and expresses a sense of solidarity with the speech community. Two, in Kashmir, people are worried about threats to their identity from outside and about the endangered nature of their mother tongue. Nevertheless, such results contradict the actual communicative practices of the speech community.

It may be noted that 87.3% of the respondents wished to be identified sometimes as Urdu speakers within Kashmir. Interestingly, 79.1% also

wished to be identified sometimes as English speakers, which is probably based on the overt prestige associated with the language. For Punjabi, none of the respondents wished to be identified as a speaker of it all the time and most respondents (89.1%) wished to not be identified as Punjabi speakers in Kashmir. Similarly, in the case of Hindi, none of the respondents wanted to be identified as a Hindi speaker all the time, and the majority (61.8%) did not wish to be identified as Hindi speakers at any time. Nevertheless, 38.2% reported that they would like to identify themselves as a Hindi speaker in Kashmir sometimes.

Once again, linguistic identity is not asserted by the mere desire for identification with a particular language but is communicated through 'acts of language' (331), as pointed out by Tabouret-Keller. Such findings are analogous to the illustrious study of William Labov regarding the 'Case Study of Martha's Vineyard' (1961), and 'The Social Stratification of /r/ in New York City' (1972). Labov observed that it was either a positive or a negative attitude towards Martha's Vineyard and the wish to accommodate the individual's language to the language of the speech community with which he/she identifies or plans to associate. These observations indicate that speech is always linked to social attitudes and social groups in society. Similarly, in the second study, about social stratification, he observed that "if any two subgroups of New York City speakers are ranked on a scale of social stratification, then they will be ranked in the same order on their differential use of /r/" (44). However, integrative and instrumental attitudes and prestige associated with a code, whether at the micro level (like pronunciation) or at the macro level (like power and economy), are associated with identification process at the individual and group level, with an intention to be associated with the notion of standardisation, power, and prestige. Further, sharing the community language within the community entails an important choice to show solidarity with the community and to draw boundaries of privacy for non-community members.

## 4.8. Conclusion

The present chapter explored the language attitudes and language preferences of the Kashmiri speech community by investigating the different features and attitudes respondents associated with a given set of languages and their speakers. The findings demonstrate that native Kashmiris seem to have lost the motivation to learn and maintain the Kashmiri language. It is observed that most respondents reported that they are able to read Urdu and consider it very easy to write in, as compared to English or Kashmiri.

Such findings substantiate the hypothesis of biglossia in the Kashmiri speech community, where there is a marked distinction in the functional aspects of written and spoken language(s). Similarly, in terms of the languages considered powerful and prestigious, Urdu dominates Kashmiri. Ironically (but for explainable reasons), among the Kashmiri speech community, there is an underlying linguistic pride associated with Urdu. No wonder, that Urdu is perceived as a symbol of social status.

Furthermore, the general tendency of favouring Urdu and English is bound to have an impact on the Kashmiri language. In today's Kashmir, Urdu has been associated with increased importance for various reasons. The perception of Kashmiri in the community is negative, whereas that of Urdu is very positive. Such perceptions significantly reshape the collective attitudes of the community towards certain codes, which subsequently proves to be a major cause of convergence and divergence.

The willingness of communities to give up their first language is reframed by various factors, including attitudes and motivation. By looking at the various attitudinal and motivational dimensions and how they evolved, it was found that people not only have positive attitudes and perceptions towards Urdu vis-à-vis Kashmiri but that they also perceive speakers of Urdu as considerably superior to Kashmiri speakers. The nature of the perceptions and attitudes towards a language has practical implications for motivating speakers to maintain or shift from one code to another.

The chapter also shows that in the media too, Urdu dominates other languages. There are several positive and practical reasons for the preference for Urdu in programmes broadcast over the radio/television. It also substantiates the significant role played by the media in shaping and reshaping the language attitudes of speech communities and consequently their motivation for changing languages roles through the shift and maintenance of certain codes.

The analysis of self-rated proficiencies provides strong support for the evidence that in many respects, Urdu is dominating Kashmiri, whereas Kashmiri is losing popularity. Thus, it can be concluded that Kashmir is going through linguistic acculturation and its speakers are losing linguistic self-confidence. Nevertheless, it is significant to point out that even though English is also preferred for various purposes, Urdu still takes precedence over other languages, mainly because of its integrative as well as instrumental dimensions. English is preferred mainly for instrumental reasons.

It can be summarised that in addition to socio-cultural factors (status, wealth, politics, and power), demographic factors (group size and

distribution), and institutional support factors (media, education, government, etc.) determine language preferences, attitudes, and motivation. In the Kashmir of today, all these factors seem to favour the promotion of Urdu (and to some extent, English), and this does not bode well for the future of the Kashmiri language, and consequently, for its associated linguistic identity.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# LANGUAGE ATTRITION AND LINGUISTIC IDENTITIES

The study of first language (L1) attrition has become a challenging subfield of applied linguistics. This chapter presents aspects of L1 attrition (the Kashmiri language, in the present case) and the impact on language shift, loss, and linguistic identity. It discusses the theoretical and empirical issues concerning language attrition, and it studies the main linguistic and possible grammatical structures that are affected by the process of attrition. Some of the extra-linguistic factors that contribute to attrition have also been discussed briefly. Specifically, the chapter investigates the loss and attrition of the Kashmiri lexicon, proverbs/idiomatic expressions, rhymes, names of the months, and some culture-specific notions in the Kashmiri speech community, and its impact on linguistic identity. This study attempts to contribute to the field of primary language attrition in the Kashmiri speech community and its presumed future implications. It studies the role, influence, and impact of Urdu/English on the Kashmiri lexicon in general, and on cultural-specific items like proverbs and rhymes, in particular. It aims to identify traces of attrition in the items of daily usage and their replacement (if any) from the lexicon of another language. Thus, the chapter explores the nature of the attrition and some of its possible causes.

The present chapter considers compensatory strategies as manifestations of a speaker's struggle when engaged in the task of retrieving lexical items and proverbs. Some of the strategies used by respondents to convey a message when struggling with the problem of finding the appropriate word or expression to do so are also discussed. In general, the chapter provides a description of the process of attrition of the Kashmiri language and concludes with a note that this process of attrition, which is the outcome of a language shift, could be very crucial not only for the Kashmiri language and its associated identity but also for the associated culture, including oral tradition.

## 5.1. Correlation between Linguistic Identity and Language Attrition

Language attrition was primarily studied from a pathological perspective in people with aphasia, but the term was later extended to cover non-pathological cases of language loss. Primary language attrition, according to Altenberg and Vago (2004), refers to the loss of language abilities of non-disordered individuals in an L2 environment. The underlying and unquestioned assumption in practically any given study, as pointed out by Köpke and Schmid (2002), is that to measure mistakes in an attrited language—mistakes of production, grammatical judgments, grammar, naming—is to measure the degree of an individual speaker's attrition (28). Nevertheless, Yağmur (2002) emphasises that language attrition is not an isolated phenomenon; rather, it is a special case of variation in the acquisition of language(s) and can best be studied, described, documented, and explained within a larger framework that includes all other phenomena of L1/L2 acquisition, bilingualism, language use/choice, code switching, code mixing, and language attitudes.

Language attrition has been used synonymously with language loss. Using the term 'language loss', Anderson (1982) points out that "language loss can be defined as a form of individual language evolution through which an individual loses (part of) his competence or proficiency in a particular language" (84). However, Jaspaert, et al. (1986) conjecture that the process of loss is not to be located in an individual forgetting or losing some elements or rules of a language but in an incomplete transfer of a language from one generation to the next. Language loss, according to Lambert (1982), may simply be described as a negative change in the level of language skills over time. He also observes that "the process of language loss is traced by following a group of individuals who forget part of a language through the non-use of or minimal contact with that language" (6). Nevertheless, it is significant to note that an individual speaker is taken as the central unit of analysis.

In the introductory chapter, a detailed schematic description of language attrition and its impact on linguistic identities has been provided. The relationship between language acquisition and attrition has also been examined. In recent years, issues of identity theory have featured prominently within research on bilingualism at large, and language attrition, specifically. Interestingly, on the one hand, second language acquisition has long been a subject of considerable scientific interest from various disciplines including applied linguistics. On the other hand, only a limited number of studies have investigated first language attrition with

reference to psychological and philosophical phenomena such as self and identity, whereas psychological, philosophical, and sociological studies about identity have paid little or no attention to the relationship between identity and forgetting one's mother tongue. Questions concerning the socio-psychological consequences of language forgetting, such as whether or not it affects the individual's identity, have been the focus of writers and philosophers like Hoffman (1989) and Kristeva (2000).

In fact, identity is widely seen as a cognitive construct, and language can be seen as an inseparable part of identity. For socio-psychological investigations, the focus is on an individual speaker's language systems and on the development and portrayal of identity. This line of investigation is based on the recognition of the fact that language is one of the most important factors of identity and identification. Thus, people speak like the people they want to be like, and they use the way they talk to communicate aspects of their own personality.

Another important socio-psychological approach to the relationship between language and identity is the ethnolinguistic vitality theory. Giles, et al. (1977) proposed this theory to understand the role of socio-structural variables in inter-group relations, cross-cultural communication, second language learning, mother tongue maintenance, language shift, and language loss. According to Giles, et al., the vitality of an ethnolinguistic group is defined as "that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in inter-group situations" (308). The theorists further assert that status, demography, institutional support, and control factors combine to make up the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups. A group's strengths and weaknesses in each of these domains can be assessed to provide a rough classification of that group as having low, medium, or high vitality. Low vitality groups are most likely to go through linguistic assimilation and are not considered a distinctive collective group. However, high vitality groups are likely to maintain their language and distinctive cultural traits in multilingual settings. With respect to the Kashmiri speech community, similar kinds of assumptions were noticed, such as a shift from Kashmiri to Urdu because of various instrumental and integrative factors. This shift has led to the attrition of the Kashmiri lexicon and other linguistic structures, in favour of Urdu. This will presumably lead to the loss of the native language and thus the associated identity.

In the present study, low vitality groups include the less educated, elderly, and rural people who retain native cultural and linguistic traits, whereas high vitality groups include the young, urban, and educated

respondents who are less acquainted with native cultural and linguistic traits.

## 5.2. Assessment of Lexical Attrition in Kashmiri

Lexical attrition has been characterised in terms of loss of vocabulary, loss of semantic distinctions, and reduced performance ability. As discussed in the first chapter, data for the attrition study was collected from 30 respondents (who are separate from the 110 respondents from whom the main data of the study was collected). The literature on language attrition states that so far, there is no standard methodology or technique to examine the attrition process or problems in language production (in non-pathological populations), and/or to detect problems in language production that are the outcome of attritional processes. There is great variation in the research designs and elicitation techniques used for this purpose. L1 attrition has often tended towards broader survey techniques, as applied by sociolinguists studying multilingualism and minority languages. For Yağmur (2002), an integrated framework that synthesises sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic paradigms is necessary to study attrition. As said above, it is not possible to investigate language attrition and maintenance based on the number of linguistic tests conducted without a careful description of the social context and attitudes of the speaker. There is a variety of methods adopted in the collection of data in language attrition research. This study uses the 'verbal fluency task', which is a technique, specifically aimed at tapping into lexical retrieval, which has been recognised as one of the most important and easiest consequences of L1 loss. The task focuses on the semantic aspects of lexical retrieval, by eliciting words. This technique, according to Schmid (2002), is known to be highly reliable even in cases of light retrieval difficulties and has the advantage of requiring less material and time than other tests meant to detect lexical retrieval difficulties, such as picture naming tasks.

The response procedure for data elicitation was to give an acceptable Kashmiri equivalent to a given set of words and proverbs. The subjects were requested to provide a correct Kashmiri word and to convey (as accurately as possible) the meaning of the given idiomatic expression/proverb. For each lexical item, 10-15 seconds were allotted for a response, depending on the length of the expression. In the first part of the test, after explaining the concept, the respondents were asked to produce proper Kashmiri words for a list of 40 words. Those include infrequent or unique items in a household, and items that were used

previously but are not in use any more, though they still exist in rural areas and in the cultural lexicon of Kashmiri. The methodology of 'lexical retrieval' (active retrieval of a lexical item from memory) was also employed. However, for Köpke and Schmid (2002), lexical retrieval problems are not the only manifestation of performance attrition, as there could be other possible signs of attrition, including performance and competence. The aim was to investigate the level and extent of attrition of the Kashmiri language in the speech community. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that in the first instance; most of the respondents produced the Urdu equivalent for the given words rather than the Kashmiri equivalent. It was surprising to the observer that after producing the Urdu equivalent, the respondents confidently argued that it was a Kashmiri word/equivalent and not Urdu, which is a sign of the acceptance, convergence, inclusiveness, and conceptualisation of the Urdu lexicon by the Kashmiri speech community, at the cost of the Kashmiri language. However, in such cases of attrition, it is crucial to assess whether it is a competence/performance related problem, a language shift/change, or genuine attrition. For example, for the word 'roof', most of the respondents supplied the lexical item *cha'et* /čHɔ̂:t/ (which is an Urdu equivalent), instead of producing the Kashmiri equivalent *paash* -/pa: š/. Here, it is difficult to analyse whether it is a case of competence or performance attrition.

Nevertheless, performance-related attrition may include increased uncertainty in lexical judgments, as well as difficulties in lexical recall, as observed in various studies like those by Olshtain (1989), Leyew (2003), and Sasse (1992). Schmid and de Bot (2003) conclude that evidence for lexical attrition is difficult to find despite widespread claims for its existence, but an ability to identify lexical attrition or degrees of lexical attrition may be useful in predicting attrition in other parts of grammar.

Several studies, including those of Schmidt (1985), Ecke (2004), and Trudgill (1976/1977), suggest that the loss of content morphemes precedes the loss of irregular forms, noun classes, and relational words. According to Myers-Scotton (2002), the hypothesis that content morphemes are lost before grammatical morphemes has little or no quantitative data to support it (206-207), despite its appeal. Studies like those of Tsunoda (2005) and Schmidt (1985) on trends in lexical attrition have shown that differences in attrition are closely associated with the type of cultural change accompanying the language loss/shift. Specific terms and less frequent forms may be especially prone to loss, like special speech styles or register variants, as discussed by de Bot (2003). However, kinship terms and culture-specific inanimate items may be especially affected, as suggested

by Fabunmi and Salawu (2005), and Tsunoda (2005). Terms considered resistant to loss include those referring to well-known animates, the human body, and human classification, as observed by Tsunoda (2005) and Schmidt (1985). A distinction is drawn between words that are replaced and words that are lost, with the former being more common in cases of gradual language shift. Interestingly, in the results obtained in this study, it is seen that content morphemes with less frequency of usage are more prone to attrition.

As noted earlier, a (random sample) list of 40 words was prepared, mostly including household and culture-related items (nouns). After providing a description of them, the respondents were supposed to give the correct Kashmiri equivalent of the items. It is assumed that every such item has a specific (correct) word for it, irrespective of the context, which is what was expected from the respondents. For example, in Kashmiri, there is only one word *gadwanj* /gHədv∂ng/ for "the place where drinking water is kept". Since such items do not have related words, in such cases, only the correct word was considered and no related word was entertained. However, for items like 'window', 'bedding', 'school', there are related words or synonyms in addition to the (correct) primary words. For 'window', the primary word in Kashmiri is *daeer* /də:r/ and the related word is *wob* /vob/. Similarly, for the word 'bedding', there is a main word for it in Kashmiri, which is *wathrun* /vatHrɔn/ , and *vodun* /vudu:n/ is a related word. Similarly, for 'school', the primary (correct) word is *tsaathaal* /tsHtiha:l/, whereas *maadras* /mə:dirəs/ is accepted as a related word. This was the procedure adopted in the study for making a distinction between correct and related words.

**Table 5-1 Kashmiri Words Provided by Respondents**

| Words supplied by respondents | Percent | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| Correct words | 30.0 | 9 |
| Related words | 36.7 | 11 |
| Incorrect/Don't know at all | 33.3 | 10 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

Paradoxical as it may seem, a careful examination of the results reveals that only 30.0% of the respondents were able to provide the correct words for the items (things/concepts) explained to them. In other words, the majority of the respondents (70%) were unable to provide proper Kashmiri words for the explained items, which significantly shows the extent of attrition in Kashmiri among its native speakers. Nevertheless, as shown in

Table 5-1, 36.7% of the respondents provided words that were not accurate but were related to the meanings of the items (almost synonyms of it). For example, when asked to provide the word for 'hut', the respondents gave the word *kothu* /kɔthɨ/ instead of *paer* /pə:r/. However, in the Kashmiri spoken in Baramulla and Srinagar, the phoneme [d] is replaced with [r] and is thus pronounced /pə:d/. Similarly, for the word 'window', some respondents gave the word *vob* /vɔ̂b/ (which, in Kashmiri, is actually used for smaller windows) instead of the actual word *deaar* /də:r/. Almost one-third of the respondents (33.3%) were unable to provide any word, stating that they do not know the Kashmiri equivalent. The minimum number of words provided by the respondents in all the categories was seven and the maximum number of words was 27, with a standard deviation of 4.82%.

Kaufman (2001) explains that "attrition of the L1 among older children and adults differs from the L1 attrition process among pre-pubescent children" (19). Studies indicate that the age of onset of bilingualism and the age of onset of attrition are crucial. As explored in several studies—Isurin (2000), Kaufman and Aronoff (1991), Schmitt (2004), Seliger (1989/1991), and Turian and Altenberg, (1991)—there is converging evidence that an L1 system can indeed be eroded to quite a dramatic degree if the attrition process sets in well before puberty. The present study consolidates such findings by pointing out that for those respondents who had been outside the state from their early years or in boarding schools from the primary stages, it was very difficult to recall any lexical item or proverb, as compared to those who had been in Kashmir. In other words, more signs of attrition were observed in respondents who had been out of the linguistic context before puberty. Similarly, for a clearer understanding of this relationship and of the responses of different age groups, a significant point that emerges here is that the younger age groups not only provided fewer answers but also provided the Urdu equivalent instead of Kashmiri words for the given items.

Most respondents took more processing time to retrieve a word, as compared to the time taken during normal communication. Besides, a number of phenomena reported in attrition studies can be accounted for in terms of activation thresholds. For example, the first sign of language attrition is not the loss of certain items but an increase in the length of time needed for their retrieval, as explored in a study by Hansen (2001). A number of studies—Berman (1979), Slobin (1993), and Yukawa (1998)—demonstrate that re-acquiring a language can be dramatically more rapid than acquiring it for the first time. For the recall of words, a high level of activation is needed, whereas a lower level is sufficient for recognition.

However, in a study conducted by Nelson (1978), it was found that if the activation level drops below a certain level, then the item can no longer be retrieved. In Yukawa's (1998) study, attrition was considered the result of a processing failure to use knowledge that remained virtually intact. Almost similar observations were made in the present study, where most of the respondents often replied, "I forget the word", or "this is the only Kashmiri word", and "give me some more time; I know the word". Significantly, after listening to the actual Kashmiri equivalent, most respondents remarked that "now-a-days nobody uses these Kashmiri words", implying that certain words have lost their usage, relevance, prestige, and effectiveness. Nonetheless, it is surprising to note that most respondents supplied the word *bister* /biːstər/ (an Urdu equivalent) for the word 'bedding', for which the actual Kashmiri equivalent is *wathrun* /wətHrɔn/, which strangely enough, they did not know. When the researcher gave them this word, some of the respondents replied that they had heard the word but that it was not used anywhere anymore, not even in remote rural areas. Once again, this strengthens the position that less frequently used words are more prone to attrition.

In order to investigate the exact number of words provided by the respondents from each category, the data (Table 5.1) was further analysed further. Accordingly, to get the results for each of the categories separately—correct words, almost correct, incorrect words, and don't know at all—an analysis was done, as shown in Tables 5-2, 5-3, 5-4, and 5-5, respectively.

**Table 5-2 Actual Number of Correct Words Provided by Respondents**

| Number of correct words provided by respondents | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| 7–17 words | 41.0 | 12 |
| 18–27 words | 59.0 | 18 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

As observed in Table 5-2, 41.0% of the respondents gave 7–17 correct words, while 59.0% provided 18–27 correct words. However, there was a limit to the number of words; thus, the minimum number of correct words (provided by the respondents) in all categories is seven and the maximum number of words is 27, with a standard deviation of 4.82%.

Thus, it can be interpreted that in this category (correct words), the number of words known to the respondents is decreasing, and no respondent was able to supply the exact word for all of the items. This

clearly indicates the extent of lexical attrition in the case of the Kashmiri speech community, where no one is able to remember the Kashmiri lexicon properly, because of the significant language shift and divergence from Kashmiri.

**Table 5-3 Frequency of Almost Correct Words Provided by Respondents**

| Number of almost correct words provided by respondents | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| 5–12 words | 53.3 | 16 |
| 13–23 words | 46.7 | 14 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

The table above shows the number of lexical items for which the respondents provided 'almost correct words' but not the exact word in Kashmiri. It was observed that 53.3% of the respondents were able to provide such replies for 2–12 words, and 46.7% were able to provide 13–23 'almost correct words'. Nevertheless, like the first category, here too, none of the respondents was able to provide 'almost correct words' for all of the 40 lexical items. The minimum number of almost correct words was 2 and the maximum was 23. In this category, it was observed that most respondents gave words either belonging to Urdu or English in the first instance. For example, most of them gave the word 'kitchen' for cooking place, rather than its Kashmiri counterpart *daan-kuth* /da:n̪ kʊ̈th/. Similarly, most respondents produced the word 'gas stove' for the instruments of cooking, rather than its Kashmiri counterpart *daan* /da:n/. This clearly illustrates the loss and replacement of pre-existing concepts in the Kashmiri language. In a similar kind of study conducted with Cuban immigrants in the U.S., Otheguy and Garcia (1988, 1993) found that Spanish-English bilinguals do not always find traditional Spanish terms congruent with their new circumstances. Here, it is important to note that in the case of the Kashmiri speech community, there are two important sources of change: modernisation, which implies a change from the usage of old traditional items to new ones; and, language shift. Both influence the frequency of the usage of words for such items.

In the category of responses ('almost correct words'), lexical borrowing reflects a high frequency lexicon that seems to be more accessible to the speakers of Urdu than Kashmiri are. There were various cases of such deviations in the data, such as the words for kitchen, bedding, clothing, slippers, school, and bathroom.

The activation threshold hypothesis (ATH), as discussed earlier, illustrates a strong correlation between the frequency of use of a linguistic item and its activation and availability to the language user. Accordingly, it is assumed that the thresholds of the respective linguistic items under investigation have changed because of the low frequency of usage, which results in slow access to the item(s). In other words, such mechanisms appear to have due impact on the dominant patterns of a language. Since such lexical items in Kashmiri are used less frequently, they are activated less frequently, and consequently, need more stimulation to be reactivated than items that are frequently activated. Applying this idea to the context of Kashmiri-Urdu bilingual memory, when an Urdu lexical item is selected, the Kashmiri counterpart is simultaneously inhibited. This means that the activation threshold of the Kashmiri language is increasing, which suggests that the attrition of the Kashmiri lexicon is occurring as a result of the long-term absence of stimulation for such lexical items. Depending on the frequency of use, different linguistic items within the same language might require more stimulation, which is a clear indication of attrition as observed in the case of Kashmiri.

**Table 5-4 Frequency of Incorrect Words Provided by Respondents**

| Incorrect words | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| 1–3 words | 63.3 | 19 |
| 4–12 words | 36.7 | 11 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

Table 5-4 presents the response patterns of the respondents who, even after several attempts, could not provide the correct word in Kashmiri for the given set of items. For example, when asked about "the place where drinking water is kept", none of the respondents was able to provide the Kashmiri word for it. In this category, 63.3% of them provided 1–3 incorrect words, and the remaining 36.7% produced 4–12 incorrect words. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that like the two other categories, in this category too, the respondents did not provide even the Urdu/English equivalents (lexical items), but provided incorrect Kashmiri words, that too after 2-3 attempts. Surprisingly, during the interview, one of the respondents, who had been studying outside Kashmir for the last ten years, went to the kitchen to ask her mother for the Kashmiri equivalent of the word used for 'churning curd'. In this case, it is significant to note that the age of departure from L1 usage also affects language loss. Attrition data suggests that the younger a child is when s/he changes her/his linguistic

environment, the higher the probability that the L2 will replace the L1. This is clearly an indication of lexical attrition in the Kashmiri speech community. As discussed earlier, among the non-linguistic factors of attrition, attitudes also play a significant role. Moreover, in the case of the Kashmiri speech community (as discussed in Chapter 4), attitudes play a crucial role in the maintenance of Urdu and in the shift away from the Kashmiri language. However, Hutz (2002) remarks that "extra-linguistic factors such as age, education, identity, amount of L1 contact, and attitudinal and motivational factors were often found to be crucial predictor variables in language attrition" (191). In the present study, it was observed that all such factors play some role in the attrition of the Kashmiri language, directly or indirectly. For example, the role of attitudes has already been discussed in previous chapters, in the maintenance and shift of the Kashmiri language. Interestingly, strong attitudes were found in favour of Urdu, consequently leading to a reduced frequency of the usage of the Kashmiri lexicon, which is a crucial factor in attrition. In this chapter, an attempt is made to explore other predictors such as age and education.

Moreover, the amount of contact (as discussed in the first chapter), has direct consequences for the frequency of L1 activation. The description provided in the fourth chapter shows that the amount of contact with the Kashmiri language, which is palpably decreasing, has also influenced the frequency of activation of its lexicon. Thus, it can be concluded that in addition to other linguistic factors, attitudes and consequent motivational factors are also responsible for the attrition of the Kashmiri language.

**Table 5-5 Respondents Who Do Not Know Any of the Words**

| Don't know at all | Percent | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| 1–5 words | 53.3 | 16 |
| 6–20 words | 46.7 | 14 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30.0 |

Interestingly, the above category of responses ("don't know at all") is different from the other three categories, in the sense that here, the respondents were neither able to provide any Kashmiri word (correct or incorrect), nor any Urdu/English counterpart. Table 5-5 shows that 53.3% of the respondents could not provide any reply/word (for 1–5 words), and 46.7% of them could not provide any word for 6–20 items from the given set. Moreover, in this category, the respondents simply replied that they "don't know at all". Interestingly, most of the respondents in this category

were younger in age (18–29 years). As already discussed, younger age groups are more prone to attrition in bilingual situations. Specifically, when they prefer to adopt L2 lexicon more frequently. This leads to a low frequency of use of the L1 lexicon, and consequently, to difficulty in the retrieval of the L1 lexicon.

Among them, the respondents, who were/are studying outside Kashmir from early stages, found it difficult to provide any word for the given set of items. The reason is simple: they had never come across any such word. However, some respondents mentioned that they had heard the word but had forgotten it and that they could not recall it unless they listened to it again. As illustrated earlier, the amount of contact with the L1 also functions as a reason for attrition. The /less the contact with the L1, the more the difficulty in the retrieval process, this is a crucial indication of attrition. Taking into consideration the theoretical background provided in this chapter, the findings are a clear indication of language (or lexical) attrition, because of a change and shift mostly in favour of Urdu.

It is pertinent to note that there are two main processes of attrition: (i) replacement of an L1 word with a word from L2; and, (ii) activation of a conscious and systematic retrieval process of the specific word. Both processes work as preferred strategies in attrition. This is evidenced by the variety of substitutions the respondents provided for the items in question, and by the fact that they often commented that they had forgotten the Kashmiri equivalent (because they never used it) or that they had forgotten a particular item and insisted on finding the proper word for it by further probing their semantic memory. Moreover, the respondents who had difficulty with the initial retrieval of a word usually used the Urdu/English word for it.

It is apparent from the analysis that most respondents belonging to the new generation of Kashmiris exhibit some reduction in lexical accessibility in Kashmiri. They also happen to be fully aware of the fact that there is an appropriate word, which they used to know, but suddenly seems to require an intense search of their semantic memory. They often express this, saying, “I forgot the word”, or “it is the only word”, and “give me some more time, I know the word”. When faced with the need to retrieve the item quickly, under the strain of face-to-face communication, the respondents used general terms that share some of the features of the intended word, or they made use of paraphrasing or circumlocution. Further, the most common manifestations were ‘word finding difficulties’, documented extensively by many attrition studies conducted by researchers like Ammerlaan (1996), Köpke (1999), Waas (1996/1999), and Yağmur (1997). More significantly, the participants’ self-correction, hesitation,

pauses, and metalinguistic comments indicate that they are aware of their lexical retrieval difficulties. The respondents' self-repetition, self-clarifications, confirmations, requests, literal translations, slower speech rate, and increased pauses are clear examples of attrition among the younger generation of the Kashmiri speech community.

## 5.3. Lexical Borrowing: Loss and Replacement of Kashmiri Lexical Items

From time to time, scholars working in the field of attrition have debated the differences and similarities between attrition and borrowing. Hutz (2002) illustrates that lexical borrowing occurs "when speakers in language contact situations find that their lexical repertoire is inadequate to convey certain concepts or notions, they often resort to lexical borrowing or lexical innovation" (195). Hutz further added a third category, called 'strategic loanwords', that is, the conscious use of loanwords as a communicative strategy. To the contrary, Haugen (1953) has made a distinction between necessary loanwords, which fill lexical gaps, and unnecessary loanwords, which are essentially gratuitous because of the existence of an equivalent item. However, Odlin (1989) proposes that in the case of strategic borrowing, the attriter also uses L2 words to fill lexical gaps, but here the borrowing might be considered a lexical communication strategy or what Jasparet and Kroon (1992) call 'lexical repair' (139). Attriters often experience lexical access problems, that is, a discrepancy between what they would like to say (communicative intention) and how to say something in the L1 they know. In order to bridge the gap between their communicative needs and their limited communicative resources, attriters may make deliberate use of borrowing. The interesting point in such cases is that the speaker assumes or at least hopes that the listener or reader shares the language from which the word is borrowed.

Pavlenko states that "(lexical) borrowing may or may not be an indicator of L1 attrition..." (48), and that if the lexical item does not have an L1 equivalent, the use of the item cannot be considered a sign of L1 attrition but rather an enrichment of conceptual repertoire. Lexical borrowing, according to Pavlenko, is evidence of L1 attrition only in those cases "where an exact L1 equivalent exists but is no longer available to the speaker in either production or comprehension, even when tested in a monolingual L1 context, or at least, when the retrieval of such an item causes significant difficulty and delay" (50). Thus, there is a significant difference between borrowing and the prediction of attrition, and it must

be noted that not every case of lexical borrowing is a case of attrition. However, in the present work, it was crucial to examine the difference between borrowing and attrition. Some examples make the difference clear. For instance, most of the younger respondents were unable to produce or recall the Kashmiri words for kitchen and bathroom; instead, they simply supplied English equivalents for these two items. This is more a case of attrition than borrowing. Similarly, for utensils used to drink tea, most of the respondents replied with semi-borrowed words, that is, *chai cup* / čhɨ: cɔ̂p/ instead of *chai pyala* / čhɨ: pɔ̂:lɨ/, the actual Kashmiri word, which is an example of both borrowing and attrition. However, when the respondents were asked to name the metallic pots used for cooking, they gave words like pressure cooker, rice cooker, tea set, thermos flask, etc., which is more a case of borrowing, as these items did not exist in the kitchens of Kashmir until the early eighties. In addition, the word used for ablution was called *buth chalun* /bɔtH čHlɔn / (literally meaning, 'washing face') and is used equally by the Muslim and the non-Muslim community in Kashmir. However, many educated Muslims have replaced it with the word *vazzu karun* /vəzu kərɔn/, which is a semi-Arabic *vazu* /vəzu / and semi-Urdu *karun* /kərɔn/ (from the Urdu word *karna* meaning 'do') equivalent for ablution. Here, it is not simply an example of borrowing but an identity statement that differentiates the other forms of washing one's face from specifically washing it for prayers (*nemaaz)*, as done by Muslims. This way of changing words is a proclamation about replacing (semantically inclusive) lexical items of the Kashmiri language with (more specific) culturally and semantically exclusive (Islamic) words to reframe and assert the specific identity via (specific, exclusive) linguistic statements and divergence.

In this category, lexical borrowings reflect a high frequency lexicon that seems to be more accessible to speakers of Urdu than Kashmiri are. There were various cases of such deviation in the data, such as the words for kitchen, bedding, clothing, slippers, and bathroom. This incorporation of an Urdu vocabulary into the participants' Kashmiri speech could have resulted from the high frequency usage of those concepts in the Urdu/English lexicon in everyday life, as well as from no prior experience with or knowledge of the corresponding terminology in Kashmiri. It should be noted here that there was also a case of strong emphasis on the use of non-Kashmiri lexical items while (mistakenly) considering them a part of the Kashmiri lexicon.

The rate of borrowing is likely to be a good indicator of lexical attrition, if it can be quantified, and if the borrowing entails the loss or decreased use of another term. When borrowing does not replace original

terms, it is difficult to assume that loss has occurred. In the case of the Kashmiri speech community, a loss and replacement of pre-existing concepts has also been noticed. There is at least one cultural term, which has been lost, 'tool for grinding grain', which exists only in some rural locations of Kashmir, and the younger urban generation has not even seen it. Consequently, the frequency of usage of words for such items is very low. This is a major cause of attrition, which indicates that in the Kashmiri speech community, there is also a loss of terms related to the traditional ways of life.

## 5.4. Attrition of Proverbs/Idiomatic Expressions and Rhymes

Every community and language has its own stock of proverbs. A proverb (from the Latin *proverbium*), also called a byword or nay word, is a simple and concrete saying that is popularly known and repeated and is often metaphorical in meaning. Proverbs are usually borrowed from similar languages and cultures, sometimes coming down to the present through more than one language. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines a proverb as "a short saying stating a general truth or piece of advice".

Idioms, like proverbs, are common sayings. An idiom is a phrase whose meaning cannot be determined by the literal definition of the phrase itself but that refers instead to a figurative meaning known only through common use. In linguistics, idioms are widely assumed to be figures of speech that contradict the principle of compositionality. Some scholars have defined idioms as words collocated together that happen to become fossilised, that is, become fixed over time. This collocation of words commonly used in a group changes the definition of each of the words in that group. That is, the collocated words develop a specialised meaning as a whole, giving rise to an idiom.

Kashmir has a long and rich tradition of folk literature. As in other languages, idioms are assimilated and improvised in Kashmiri to suit different occasions and cultural contexts. There are different genres of Kashmiri folk literature: folk tales, comic narratives, folk songs, proverbs, riddles, etc. Folk tales are of different types, presenting themes related to romance, adventure, miracles, anecdotal episodes, fables, fairy tales, ghost tales, and tales of wit and wisdom. Nevertheless, so far, Kashmiri folk literature has not been studied in depth. Most of the folk literature is scattered and has not been properly compiled. There is wide scope for research in the different genres of Kashmiri folk literature, specifically, proverbs, idioms, rhymes, and fairy tales.

The Kashmiri language has many different types of proverbs; some of these are simple folk sayings; some are philosophical, aspiring to deal with the great mysteries and complexities of life, while others are metaphorical. The origins of the proverbs in any language are difficult to establish. They are related to religious, cultural, historical, and literary texts. A large number of Kashmiri proverbs are quotes taken from the literary/poetic compositions of famous saint poets such as Lalleshwari and Noor-ud-Deen Noorani. A number of proverbs are borrowed from Sanskrit and Perso-Arabic sources. Nevertheless, the sources of the proverbs have not been indicated. Kashmiri proverbs are of interest from the point of view of their style, for a large number of them are in a conversational style.

Interestingly, all the proverbs and idiomatic expressions in Kashmiri exist and pass onto future generations via oral tradition alone. In the case of the Kashmiri speech community, it was observed that literacy in terms of reading is almost zero, as far as the Kashmiri language is concerned, which may be a crucial factor in the attrition of the Kashmiri language in the community.

Notably, the conceptualisation of proverbs/idiomatic expressions occurs at a later stage than the acquisition of other linguistic structures. They are different from the day-to-day use of language. Thus, proverbs are different from ordinary communication because they are fixed; it is difficult and uncommon to produce new proverbs easily. People conceptualise idiomatic expressions and proverbs only after they reach a certain 'linguistic maturity', which is when they understand and use highly complex proverbial expressions. In this study, keeping the factors of age and linguistic maturity in mind, data for proverbs was only elicited from adults. In fact, linguistic maturity shows that gathering proverb-related data from children is not reliable, for children tend to interpret proverbs literally.

**Table 5-6 Knowledge of Kashmiri Proverbs/Idiomatic Expressions among Respondents**

| Knowledge of Proverbs | Percentage | Frequency | Mean | Std. dev. | Mini-mum | Maxi-mum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Meaning and Usage | 30.2 | 9 | 4.9 | 3.7 | 1 | 12 |
| Meaning Only | 30.5 | 9 | 7.2 | 3.8 | 2 | 18 |
| None | 39.3 | 12 | 8.0 | 6.5 | 0 | 20 |

Here, the main purpose was to explore and test the knowledge and extent of attrition of Kashmiri-specific proverbs/idiomatic expressions. To

test such knowledge, the responses were divided into three categories, as shown in the table above. The first category consisted of those respondents who were able to provide the meaning as well the usage of such expressions. It is significant to note that all proverbs/idiomatic expressions in Kashmiri are used in/for specific situations/contexts to convey a specific meaning. Table 5-6 clearly demonstrates that only 30.2% of the respondents knew the meaning as well as the usage of the given set of expressions. For this category of respondents, the minimum number of proverbs/idiomatic expressions known was 1 and the maximum was 12. The second category of respondents (30.5%) included those who knew the meaning of such expressions but not their usage or context of usage. They agreed that they had heard the expressions but were unable to recognise their usage. Interestingly, this category of respondents belonged mostly to relatively younger age groups than the first category, where most of the respondents belonged to older age groups. In this category, the minimum number of proverbs/idiomatic expressions known to the respondents was 2 and the maximum was 18. As shown in Table 5-6, the third category of respondents consisted of those who knew neither the meaning nor the usage of such expressions. In this case, some respondents acknowledged that they had heard such expressions once or twice but had forgotten them, whereas others responded that they had never heard such expressions before. Surprisingly, some of them tried to provide literal meanings (of some words) for these expressions. It was observed that in this category, most of the respondents belonged to younger age groups, but with an equal distribution of gender and rural/urban settings. It is to be emphasised that most respondents were able to utter some proverbs in Urdu and/or English.

Thus, it emerges from the above analysis that there is a marked attrition of Kashmiri proverbs/idiomatic expression among the younger generation in the Kashmiri speech community. In this regard, Koul (2005) asserts that tests conducted to assess language loss indicate that there is a loss of vocabulary related to culture-bound items, food items, typical Kashmiri household items, architecture, and environment, which are not in use anymore. Similarly, children do not understand and use idioms, proverbs, and literary terms in Kashmiri.

It is worth mentioning here that there are hardly any studies on the attrition of proverbs/idiomatic expressions. Therefore, there is no methodology to investigate or collect relevant data for attrition studies. Moreover, no serious efforts been made to investigate the reasons for the attrition of proverbs/idiomatic expressions, which may or may not be similar to the reasons for the attrition of other linguistic structures like nouns. However, based on theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, it

can be presumed that the foremost reason for the attrition of proverbs in the present study is the low frequency of usage and reduced contact with Kashmiri proverbs, which has direct consequences for the frequency of activation of L1 structures. Further, it can be argued that proverbs are less frequently activated, and hence, need more stimulation for their reactivation. The loss of such expressions would be a great cultural loss for the speech community. As pointed out earlier, these traditions are entirely oral, so once they undergo attrition; it would be difficult to retrieve such expressions. Moreover, in the case of the Kashmiri speech community, contact with Kashmiri is decreasing due to various reasons, which is also a factor in attrition.

Similar to the methodology adopted for the analysis of the three different categories of word lists (Tables 5-2–5-5). In order to study the exact number of proverbs/idiomatic expressions known to respondents with (i) meaning and usage; (ii) meaning only; and, (iii) nil, the data was further analysed to obtain results for each category separately, as shown in Tables 5-7, 5-8, and 5-9, respectively.

**Table 5-7 Frequency of Proverbs Known to Respondents with Meaning and Usage**

| Meaning and Usage | Percent | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| 1–4 proverbs | 53.3 | 16 |
| 5–12 proverbs | 46.7 | 14 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

As observed in Table 5-7, 53.3% of the respondents gave the correct meaning and usage of 1–4 proverbs, while 46.7% were able to provide the correct meaning and usage of 5–12 proverbs. Moreover, in this category, the maximum numbers of proverbs the respondents knew in terms of their meaning as well as usage was 12 and the minimum was 1. Surprisingly, none of the respondents was able to remember or retrieve all 24 proverbs with meaning and usage. This clearly indicates the extent of attrition of proverbs, which is culturally more specific, in the case of the Kashmiri speech community. Thus, their attrition and loss would result in the loss of culture too.

**Table 5-8 Frequency of Proverbs Known to Respondents with Meaning Only**

| Meaning only | Percent | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| 2–6 proverbs | 29.3 | 9 |
| 7–18 proverbs | 70.7 | 21 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

Table 5-8 presents the distribution of respondents and the frequency of proverbs known to them with meanings only. These respondents could only give the meaning of the proverbs and not the context for their use.

As expected, many respondents tried to explain the usage but could not identify the proper context for it. In this category, 29.3% of the respondents provided the meaning of 2–6 proverbs and 70.7% supplied the meaning of 7–18 proverbs. Nonetheless, it is significant to note that in this category; most of the respondents provided the correct meaning rather than a literal meaning of the expression (or word). Moreover, the maximum number of proverbs known to the respondents with 'meaning only' was 18 and the minimum was 2. None of the respondents was able to supply at least the meanings of all 24 proverbs. Nevertheless, in this category, some of the respondents provided the context of usage but inappropriately. This is clearly an indication of the fact that individuals first go through the process of attrition in terms of usage and then in terms of meaning.

**Table 5-9 Proverbs for Which Respondents Knew Neither Meaning Nor Usage**

| Nil | Percent | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| 0–6 proverbs | 46.7 | 14 |
| 7–20 proverbs | 53.3 | 16 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

Interestingly, the above category is different from the other two categories, in the sense that here, the respondents were neither able to provide any meaning nor usage for the given set of proverbs. Table 5-9 shows that 46.7% could provide neither any meaning nor usage for 0–6 proverbs, and 53.3% could provide neither any meaning nor any usage for 7–20 proverbs. In this category, the respondents simply replied that they "don't know at all". Here, unlike the two other categories, the respondents were not even able to provide the literal meaning. Moreover, in this category, the respondents were mostly younger in age (18–29 years).

Among them, the respondents who are/were studying outside Kashmir from early stages were unable to provide the meaning or the usage for any proverb or idiomatic expression. Again, most of them replied that they had heard such proverbs once or twice or had observed people around them using these expressions; however, since they were not frequently used around them, they did not remember either their usage or their meaning. These findings clearly demonstrate that language attrition occurs because of change and shift. In the Kashmiri speech community, this change, shift, and attrition are happening in favour of Urdu and are going to have cultural corollaries.

## 5.5. Attrition of Kashmiri Nursery Rhymes

The term nursery rhyme is used for the 'traditional' songs for young children. They are a medium for teaching children vocabulary, elementary mathematics, the English alphabet, names of the months, days of the week, and behavioural etiquette. As these poems are usually introduced in Nursery, they are known as nursery rhymes. They often involve the repetition of similar words in two or three sentences. The interesting aspect of nursery rhymes in Kashmiri is that they are based completely on oral tradition, vis-à-vis rhymes in other languages that are written. Surprisingly, no serious efforts have been made to document Kashmiri nursery rhymes, and at present, very few of them exist orally.

**Table 5-10 Number of Nursery Rhymes Known to Respondents**

| Knowledge of Rhymes | Percentage | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| One rhyme | 16.7 | 5 |
| Two or more rhymes | 53.3 | 16 |
| None | 30.0 | 9 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

In order to test the knowledge and nature of attrition of Kashmiri nursery rhymes, the respondents were asked if they knew any Kashmiri nursery rhymes. If they replied in the affirmative, they were requested to verbalise it. It was also noted carefully whether they knew the full rhyme. The maximum number of rhymes verbalised by any respondent was 5 and the minimum was 1. Significantly, only one respondent (male, rural, 43) was able to remember and verbalise 5 rhymes. As is evident from Table 5-10, only 16.7% of the respondents replied that they knew at least one rhyme, and in fact, verbalised one full nursery rhyme, which they had

learnt either in school, at home, or from their peers. However, 53.3% respondents were able to verbalise two or more rhymes. Sometimes, the respondents shared half or less than half a rhyme, or even just a single verse of it, and then suddenly found it difficult to retrieve the remaining part of the rhyme. Nonetheless, such rhymes were not considered, which were not fully known and shared. Moreover, 30.0% of the respondents (mostly belonging to younger age groups) were unable to provide any rhyme (even a single verse of any nursery rhyme in Kashmiri). However, some of them confessed that they had heard at least one rhyme but did not remember it any more. Interestingly, most of the respondents were capable of producing one or more nursery rhymes in Urdu or English. Thus, it can be concluded that most people in Kashmir are unable to remember/retrieve Kashmiri nursery rhymes, as they are hardly being used or taught anymore. Most schools are either Urdu or English medium now and teach rhymes only in those languages. In rural Kashmir, as in the rest of the country, parents feel proud if their children sing nursery rhymes in English (even without understanding it). Even the morning prayers sung by children in almost all schools, private or government, are in Urdu/English, which used to mostly be in Kashmiri until a decade ago (except in missionary schools). Thus, the limited number of nursery rhymes remaining is in between the transitional stage of attrition and loss.

## 5.6. Attrition of the Names of the Months

Most communities that speak diverse languages and belong to different cultural and religious groups have developed their own systems for naming time and space. Moreover, they have developed a distinct system of their own for naming the days, months, and years according to the solar and lunar calendars. Similarly, the Kashmiri speech community has also developed its own system for naming the months of the year. Surprisingly, akin to rhymes, the names of the months are once again in the form of oral tradition alone, and are hardly used anywhere in their written form.

**Table 5-11 Names of the Months in Kashmiri Provided by Respondents**

| Name of the Months in Kashmiri | Percent | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 3.3 | 1 |
| Have never heard | 80.0 | 24 |
| Have heard but don't remember | 16.7 | 5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 30 |

The respondents were asked to name the months in Kashmiri, and interestingly, most of them reported the names of the months according to the Christian calendar. When asked if they were familiar with the names of the months in Kashmiri, only some of the respondents replied positively, that too after much effort. Fascinatingly, none of them could provide the names of all the months in a single instance. Only after two or three attempts could they provide the names, that too with great difficulty. However, they provided the names of all the months of the Gregorian calendar in a single instance. The most significant reason for this is frequency of usage. Since most people and the central and state governments follow the English calendar, people remember the months but not according to the Kashmiri calendar.

Table 5-11 clearly demonstrates that only a single respondent, a 48-year-old male shopkeeper, could provide the names of the months in Kashmiri, and that too after three trials. In the first attempt, he could provide the names of half of the months, and in the second attempt, he provided the names of all the months but not in chronological order. Results show that 80% of the respondents had never heard the name of the months in Kashmiri, whereas only 16.7% said that they had heard the names of the months in Kashmiri but could not remember them, because they are hardly used anywhere.

Thus, it is safe to conclude that forgetting names of the months has come about due to low frequency of usage and reduced contact with the Kashmiri language for such purposes, which has ultimately led to attrition at various stages, in different aspects of the language. Calendars printed by the state government, semi-government organisations, and private enterprises, including the most celebrated calendars in Jammu and Kashmir provided by the Jammu and Kashmir Bank, publish the names of the months and days according to the Gregorian calendar. However, calendars provided by some Muslim organisations publish the names of the days and months in accordance with the Islamic calendar, but not in Kashmiri. Thus, people are unable to use or remember the pure Kashmiri cultural notions, the reasons for which are diverse, varying from modernisation and globalisation to identity assertion and utilitarianism.

## 5.7. Conclusion

Language attrition is a threat to a given language and its associated identity. This chapter described the different dimensions of L1 attrition. It also discussed crucial theoretical and empirical aspects of attrition, mainly among non-pathological individuals/communities, including various

possible reasons for such attrition. In addition to several linguistic factors responsible for attrition, the chapter also explored some extra-linguistic factors, such as modernisation, age, attitudes, frequency of usage, and amount of L1 contact, that act as overt or covert sources of attrition. Based on empirical evidence, the chapter also discussed that among the different linguistic/grammatical structures; the lexicon is the most vulnerable to attrition and is difficult to retrieve after a certain period. Attrition, according to the findings of the chapter, is the result of a language shift in a bilingual situation, where one language is perceived as more prestigious than the other is.

There are several ways to collect data for language attrition research. The present study mainly used the verbal fluency task, which explores lexical retrieval—one of the most important consequences of L1 loss. This technique is known to be highly reliable even where there are light retrieval difficulties, and it has the advantage of requiring less material and time than other tests dealing with lexical retrieval difficulties, such as picture naming tasks.

This study also looked into various aspects of attrition and shift and assumed that due to the process of language shift and divergence, there is a gradual attrition of the Kashmiri lexicon and of its related cultural lexical items, which might ultimately lead to the loss of the Kashmiri language, if the present condition continues the same way.

From the data analysed in this chapter, it is apparent that the new generation in Kashmir exhibits reduced lexical accessibility in Kashmiri, which is a clear indication of language attrition. They also happen to be fully aware of the fact that there is an appropriate word, which they used to know. However, suddenly it seems to require an intensive search of their semantic memory to retrieve it. It was observed that this lexical attrition has also occurred in culture-related notions such as proverbs/idiomatic expressions and rhymes. It was found that the respondents also made mnemonic associations—that is, associating Urdu words with Kashmiri words—and that when giving the meaning of a proverb, they sometimes interpreted the words literally. The chapter also showed that the time taken for providing equivalent Kashmiri lexical items for a given set of words was more than that required for normal word processing. The main reasons behind this were a lower activation threshold, less contact with the Kashmiri language, and reduced frequency in the usage of such items. It was also found that most respondents employed self-correction, hesitation, pauses, segmental lengthening, slower speech rate, self-retrieval, private speech, approximations, word coinage, literal translations, code mixing, repetition, clarification, and

conformation requests, which are prime indicators of attrition, according to available research and literature.

Thus, it may be concluded that the respondents were unable to produce lexical items, proverbs, rhymes, and names of the months in Kashmiri, which indicates that the attrition of Kashmiri is underway, and is mainly in favour of Urdu.

Finally, it is reasonable to conclude that language attrition in the Kashmiri speech community is not only a threat in terms of the loss of the Kashmiri language and identity but that it is also a threat to its culture. The outcome of attrition is loss and divergence, and the loss of a lexical item is the loss of a cultural item and its associated linguistic-cultural identity. This loss is in favour of other languages, specifically Urdu, and at the expense of the indigenous variety, that is, Kashmiri.

# CHAPTER SIX

# CONCLUSION: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

*For every language that becomes extinct, an image of man disappears.*
*—Octavio Paz*

This chapter summarises and provides an overall analysis of the main findings of the study. It begins with a brief note on the Kashmiri language and speech community. The section that follows discusses the major findings of the study. It also explains language attrition and the consequent shift, divergence, and identity transition among the non-pathological population of the Kashmiri speech community. Additionally, a comprehensive discussion on some crucial issues regarding the speech community is provided. At the end, the chapter presents the limitations of the study. It also suggests some directions for future researchers interested in this field.

## 6.1. Conceptual Framework

It needs to be said at the outset that this study was based on the premise that linguistic identities are important because they make sense to people, are meaningful, have due impact on the thinking and behaviour of individuals and groups overtly and covertly. Linguistic identities may change as they respond to the socio-political milieu of the given speech community. Further, linguistic identities cannot be studied in isolation. As this research mainly focused on linguistic identity issues, therefore, it cannot be abstracted from the wider socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts. The present study examined the nature of the changing roles of language in the Kashmiri speech community, not as a single independent variable but as a combination of several factors without which any kind of language-identity study would not only be incomplete but impossible. The approach of this study was to examine the factors triggering changes in the roles of language in the Kashmiri speech community and the impact of this

on linguistic identities. In this study, linguistic identity was considered a major characteristic of language rather than merely a part or a by-product of the other two functional dimensions of language (communication and representation).

A schematic diagram of the conceptual framework of the study is represented in Figure 6-1.

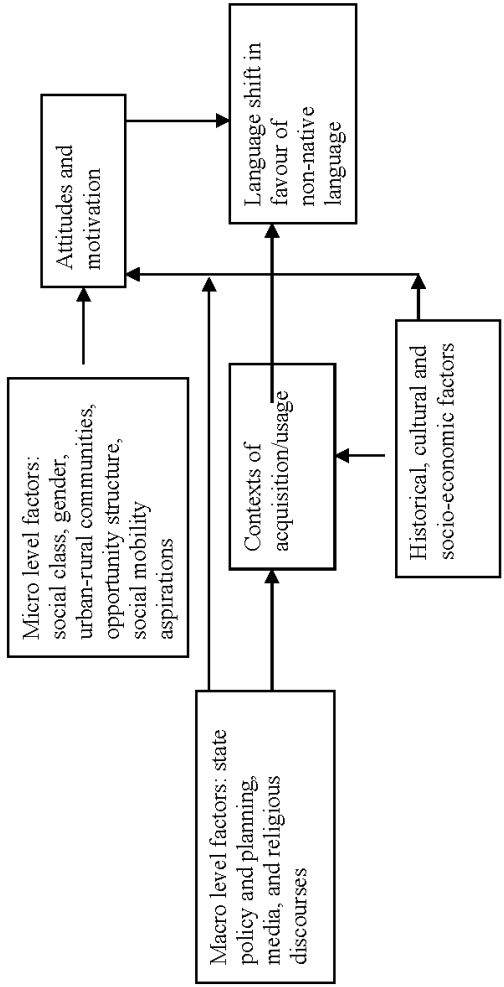



Fig.6-1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

This emphasises that most social phenomena, including language, are strongly linked with groups, since they cannot exist in isolation. Individual and social identities are mediated by language. The relationship between language use and group membership operates at different levels. The present study illustrated how linguistic-identity statements become more powerful when pooled with ethnic, social, and religious groups. In intra-group language contact situations, language identity issues become particularly significant.

Language contact situations are good conditions to study linguistic and social identities. The Urdu-Kashmiri language contact situation has existed for a long time. The study of linguistic identities in contemporary Kashmir acquires great significance in the light of developments on other fronts. However, to this day, being a sensitive issue, the subject of language shift and linguistic identity in Kashmir had not been studied. The present study attempted to fill this gap by exploring the language contact situation and its impact on the linguistic identities of the Kashmiri speech community.

In the contemporary world, bilingualism/multilingualism is becoming a necessity, and as a norm, people are using different codes in different contexts. In contemporary Kashmir, most literate and urban people are bilingual, using different codes in different contexts with different people, based on background characteristics such as education, gender, age, occupation, and schooling system (specifically, the mediums of education and instruction). People with a good educational and economic background can afford private education, where the medium is mostly Urdu/ English. The younger generation with a strong educational and economic background mostly acquires Urdu in the context of the home. In this milieu, changing language acquisition contexts indicate the future of language. It was found that the languages used for different functions have a strong correlation with the background characteristics of respondents, such as age, gender, education, and income.

The perceptions of and attitudes towards a language have practical implications for motivating speakers to maintain a code or to shift from one code to another. Positive attitudes (both integrative and instrumental) towards a language and those who speak it significantly motivate people to establish that language, leading to a shift/loss and/or divergence or convergence.

Intergenerational transmission is necessary for the maintenance of a language, because sociolinguist evidence suggests that if a code is not passed onto the next generation, its continuation is endangered. Language shift in Kashmir will therefore depend on what the common people wish to teach their children and why. The issue is: what do they want to teach their

children for cultural, educational, and other instrumental and integrative purposes? Thus, the study showed how various background characteristics, including, gender, age, residence (rural/urban), and educational background influence language use, context of acquisition, language attitudes, language behaviour, language maintenance, attrition, and shift in the linguistic identities of the Kashmiri speech community, while using a scientific approach to the issue.

## 6.2. Objectives

The main objectives explored by the present study were:

I. The role of background characteristics and of various socio-economic, political, and religious factors in changing the roles of language among the Kashmiri speech community;
II. The reasons that led to the acceptance and recognition of Urdu, a non-native language, as the dominant language of education, media, administration, politics, economic opportunity, power, and religious discourses;
III. The nature and extent of exo (interlingual) diglossia or biglossia in the Kashmiri speech community, as understood through a discussion of the impact of Urdu education, writing/orthography, and literacy;
IV. The impact of language shift on linguistic, cultural, and social identities;
V. The change in language behaviour and language practices of the speech community in various domains. This included an exploration of the knowledge of self-reported language skills and self-asserted linguistic identities of the speech community, and a measurement of the nature and extent of language attrition among the speech community, specifically with respect to vocabulary, and attrition of idiomatic expressions and proverbs;
VI. The role of language loyalty, attitudes, and motivation for convergence, divergence, and identity formation; and,
VII. The future of language(s), through an examination of the attitudes towards and motivation for transferring such languages to future generations. This included an assessment of the fate of Kashmiri identity and of whether Urdu can emerge as the primary identity of the people in the future, as well as what the likely consequences of this are for the society and culture of Kashmir.

## 6.3. Kashmiri Language and the Speech Community

Scholars are divided on the issue of the ancestors of Kashmiris and of the origin of the language. Variedly, they have linked the Kashmiri people's descent to Aryans, Pashachas, Nagas, and Israelis on the basis of different presumptions and theories. Likewise, there are diverse opinions about the origin of the Kashmiri language and its genealogical classification. Most scholars classify it under the Dardic group of the Indo-Aryan branch.

As far as the dialects of Kashmiri are concerned, they have been classified as regional and ethnic dialects. The regional dialects—*Maraz*, *Yamraz* and *Kamraz*—are spoken in the southern and south-eastern regions of Islamabad (Anantanag), in central Kashmir (such as Srinagar), and adjacent to the northern and northwestern regions of Baramulla, respectively. The ethnic dialects have been called 'Sanskritised Kashmiri'—the code used by Hindu Kashmiris, and 'Persianised Kashmiri'—the variant used by Muslim Kashmiris, because of the large number of lexical items adopted from the respective languages. Both varieties are mutually intelligible and share an almost similar lexicon, where the lexical items carry the same root forms. The only variation is that some lexical items vary in their phonological features. The following varieties of Kashmiri are spoken outside the valley of Kashmir: Kashtawari, Poguli, Rambani, Siraji, and Kohistani. Facts concerning the literary tradition and the uncertainty of scripts (what Kachru calls 'the agony of scripts' of the Kashmiri language), have greatly affected it over time. The scripts employed for Kashmiri include Sharda, Devanagari, Perso-Arabic (the official script), and Roman. It may be noted that the script is also used as a mark and assertion of identity, covertly or overtly. In contemporary Kashmir, Muslim and Hindu Kashmiris view the script controversy through religious predispositions and ideologies, which has negative impact on the Kashmiri language.

## 6.4. Major Outcomes

This study explored the dimensions of the changing roles of language, linguistic behaviour, and language practices of the Kashmiri speech community from a functional perspective, including their impact on linguistic identities. It examined the usage of language(s) in different domains and contexts such as the home, media, work place, and school. It was found that in the Kashmiri speech community, the roles of language have been changing in favour of Urdu, and consequently, the identity

associated with it. It was also found that younger, urban, female respondents with a private school background had excellent knowledge of Urdu and were replacing Kashmiri with Urdu in all domains.

In present day Kashmir, Urdu has attained more space as the medium of instruction not only in private schools but also in rural government schools. This is both a cause and consequence of the higher prestige given to Urdu.

Moreover, the policy of introducing Kashmiri in the school curriculum of the valley was made with a political motto (as was the case of including Kashmiri in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India). This was a political gimmick that merely led to status planning but lacked proper corpus planning, which is the foremost component of language standardisation. The present study explicated how Kashmiri, the first language of the state, is difficult for the Kashmiri people to read and write, whereas most of them (95.5%) are proficient in Urdu with respect to the same skills. It was observed that among the younger generation, the acquisition of language skills in Kashmiri was declining, while progressing in Urdu. It was found that younger, urban, female respondents with a private school background had excellent Urdu skills, whereas similar skills were declining in Kashmiri.

The study showed that the usage of Kashmiri in the context of the home varies according to the nature of role relationships. It emerged that in the home context, as age increases, the frequency of the usage of Kashmiri shows a gradual increase. Similarly, at home, the use of Urdu by respondents with a private school background was twice that of those from government schools.

Among the Kashmiri speech community, the contexts for the acquisition and usage of languages were changing—expanding and providing broader contexts, space, and suitable conditions for the acquisition and usage of Urdu, while the contexts for acquiring and using Kashmiri were being confined. By studying the expansion and frequency of the Urdu acquisition contexts, it was justifiably argued that in the coming decades, Urdu may replace most of the contexts still employed for the acquisition and usage of Kashmiri. For the Kashmiri speech community, Urdu had begun to occupy more informal contexts of acquisition, and was flourishing more among women, rural people, and respondents with a private school background. The probable reason for such an outcome was that among the younger generation, language roles and language acquisition contexts were changing.

Significantly, almost all of the respondents (95.5%) were able to write Urdu in Perso-Arabic script. This exemplified the dominance of Urdu in written and literary discourse and in the schooling system. In such patterns of script acquisition, it was found that English followed Urdu, rather than Kashmiri. It was evident that in addition to the other factors responsible for triggering a language shift, literacy practices and writing/orthography were also playing an important role, and that this could lead to a transition of linguistic identities in Kashmir with a spill-over effect on other identities. Script uncertainty with respect to Kashmiri has led to a situation of biglossia (interlingual diglossia) in the Kashmiri speech community, wherein an apparent functional distribution between spoken and other (non-native) written varieties was observed. The prestige associated with a non-native written variety devalues oral practices of the native vernacular variety, which would ultimately prove to be an important factor in triggering a language shift. This written language has rendered the spoken indigenous variety a 'restricted code', insufficient as a basis for societal and career advancement. In other words, the language roles and language behaviour of the Kashmiri speech community were changing in favour of Urdu, which has in turn affected the indigenous linguistic identity.

The growing trend of Urdu usage among the new generation in the Kashmiri speech community has reached such a point that people not only identify with Urdu as their spoken language but they also claim to think in the language and to comprehend the world around them in Urdu. Urdu even dominates spontaneous and involuntary linguistic operations like dreaming and thinking, and personal activities like praying. Urdu is also dominant in religious discourse. The other competing language, English, has still not occupied any space as the language of religious discourse in the Kashmiri speech community. Going by Durkheim's distinction between the sacred and the profane, Urdu is considered sacred by Muslims, while Kashmiri and English are not. Urdu also dominates story-telling, arguing, and kinship terminology. Presumably, Urdu will completely replace Kashmiri in kinship-calling, in the coming years. Furthermore, Urdu is predominant in writing, publication, and readership practices, which once again confirms the situation of interlingual diglossia.

This study also discussed language attitudes and motivation and their implications for language maintenance and language shift. Thus, it examined various attitudinal dimensions and features that people attribute to different languages. The findings reveal that Kashmiri is not considered appropriate and rich enough to provide adequate motivation and interest towards its learning and maintenance. Further, people find the reading and writing patterns of Kashmiri cumbersome and difficult. They find Urdu

easier to learn than Kashmiri. However, for instrumental purposes, it is English and Urdu that dominate.

Since there is an underlying linguistic pride associated with Urdu, it evokes more positive attitudes than Kashmiri. Perceptions, stereotypes, ideas, beliefs, thoughts, and social representations are in favour of Urdu. The community perceives the importance of Urdu to be at par with that of English. This in turn shapes the motivational aspects of accepting and accommodating Urdu in broader contexts. It was found that 40.9% of the respondents associated social prestige with Urdu, whereas 30.2% felt so for English and 11.8% for Kashmiri. The perception of the community towards Kashmiri was negative, whereas it was very positive for Urdu. Such perceptions seem to shape the collective consciousness of the community towards certain linguistic codes, which could in turn prove to be major causes for convergence and divergence. For the Kashmiri speech community, this language shift is becoming not only a threat to the loss of the Kashmiri language and identity but could also prove to be a threat to its culture.

By looking at various attitudinal and motivational dimensions and how they evolve, it was found that people not only have positive attitudes and perception towards Urdu vis-à-vis Kashmiri but that they also perceive speakers of Urdu as significantly superior to Kashmiri speakers. Since the perception of and attitudes towards a language have practical implications for motivating speakers to maintain or shift from one language to another, these perceptions and beliefs are going to have a crucial impact on the maintenance of the Kashmiri language.

It was found also that respondents perceive Kashmiri to be traditional and non-functional, whereas Urdu and English were seen as languages of social upliftment and growth. This explains why there was greater acceptance of English and Urdu as compulsory codes. It was found that even though English is preferred for various developmental purposes, Urdu still takes precedence over Kashmiri and Hindi. Urdu is preferred over Kashmiri as it is seen to perform both integrative as well as instrumental functions. English is mainly chosen for instrumental reasons, whereas Kashmiri is used for ratified integrative and symbolic reasons (witnessed by a low instrumental score).

The study shows that in media discourse as well, Urdu dominates other languages. There are several pragmatic reasons and positive attitudes associated with the preference for Urdu programmes on radio/television. The study thus substantiates the argument that the media plays a significant role in shaping and reshaping the language attitudes of speech communities, as well as their motivation for changing the roles of

languages through a shift and maintenance of codes. The analysis of self-rated proficiencies provides strong evidence for the fact that Kashmiri is losing popularity in symbolic as well as communicative aspects. Kashmiris are undergoing linguistic acculturation, and speakers seemed to be losing self-confidence in using their native language. Socio-cultural factors (status, wealth, politics, power), demographic factors (group size and distribution), and institutional support factors (media, education, government, etc.) also determine the preferences, attitudes, and motivations of people towards a specific language. In the Kashmir of today, all factors seem to favour the promotion of Urdu (and to some extent, English), which does not suggest a secure future for the Kashmiri language and identity.

Intergenerational transmission may be viewed as the key component of and/or primary reason for the maintenance of a language. Preferring multilingualism, a larger proportion of respondents (46.4%) stated that they would like to educate their children in multiple languages, including Urdu, English, Hindi, and Arabic.

Regarding the assertion of linguistic identities in and out of Kashmir, only 10.0% of the respondents stated that they speak Kashmiri outside the valley, and 42.7% reported that they would not like to be identified as Kashmiri speakers outside Kashmir. Because of such a response pattern and the several positive connotations associated with Urdu, 71.8% of the respondents were willing to be identified as Urdu speakers outside the state. However, 87.3% wished to be identified as Kashmiri speakers in Kashmir, which was, once again, an integrative reification that is contrary to the actual language behaviour of the speech community. In the case of Hindi, none of the respondents wished to be identified as a Hindi speaker.

Finally, the study explored the gradual language attrition of the Kashmiri lexicon and its related cultural lexical items, which may ultimately lead to the loss of the Kashmiri language if present conditions continue. Language attrition may be considered the first step towards language loss. Attrition is an outcome of language contact and language shift, which ultimately leads to identity transition and/or loss/shift. The analysis shows that the new generation in Kashmir exhibits a reduced lexical accessibility in Kashmiri, which is a clear indication of language attrition. It was also observed that this lexical attrition had also occurred in some cultural notions such as proverbs/idiomatic expressions and rhymes. Respondents also made mnemonic associations, that is, they associated Urdu words with Kashmiri words to understand the meanings of proverbs, by translating the lexical items literally. In addition, the time taken for providing the Kashmiri lexical items for a given set of items was more

than the normal word processing time. The main reasons behind this were lower activation threshold, less contact with the Kashmiri language, and reduced frequency of the usage of such items. Most respondents employed self-correction, hesitation, pauses, segmental lengthening, slower speech rate, self-retrieval, private speech, approximations, word coinage, literal translations, code mixing repetition requests, clarification requests, and conformation requests, which are all posited as prime indicators of attrition. Respondents were unable to produce lexical items, proverbs, rhymes, and the names of the months in Kashmiri, though they could do so more easily in Urdu. The outcome of such attrition is loss and divergence, and the loss of a lexical item is the loss of a cultural item, and finally**,** of the associated linguistic-cultural identity.

## 6.5. Discussion

The issue of linguistic identity is a very crucial one. Every day, among multilingual communities, there is news of language-identity conflict. During the era of postmodernism and globalisation, when identities have become more fluid, and everyone is trying to relocate and reassert his/her identity, such conflicts become more common. Language is not only a crucial component of identity that has mobilised groups in India and outside but it is also associated with cultural discourse.

The study of the linguistic identities of the Kashmiri speech community provides some unique opportunities. Until now, scholars and policy makers have not arrived at any consensus about the genealogical classification of Kashmiri, and they have not been able to develop a common script for it. It seems that the differences of opinion about its genealogical classification and its script are primarily dominated by religion and its associated ideology, rather than by any objective research on the subject. Kashmir has been invaded by various rulers of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. However, in the past, the people of Kashmir never accepted the languages of the rulers. The interesting question is: why are they giving up Kashmiri in favour of Urdu now? There is no overt force on them from any quarter to use Urdu, as was the case with some other languages, such as Persian. This study thus provides an answer to this question through its exploration of the several reasons responsible for the acceptance and maintenance of Urdu among the Kashmiri speech community.

By giving a comprehensive view of the linguistic identities of the contemporary Kashmiri speech community, and by studying the functional aspects of language(s) and the actual language behaviour of the speech

community in various domains, it was observed that the nature of the roles of language is changing and is shrinking the space for Kashmiri. Although the Kashmiri language has been in contact with several other languages over the past several centuries, history is witness to the fact that Kashmiri was never given due encouragement or support in giving it its deserving lingua franca status among the vast population of the valley. Further, the usage of languages other than the native one—particularly Urdu—has increased in the home context, and thus, it is legitimate to conclude that in the coming decades, Urdu might replace most of the contexts still being employed for the acquisition and usage of Kashmiri. There is a growing tendency among young people to not learn or even speak Kashmiri. The fact is that if a language is not transferred to future generations, then its survival is in danger. Thus, in the present milieu, despite overt efforts to save it, one can predict that the future of the Kashmiri language is bleak.

As a matter of fact, a language shift in a multilingual setting implies a change in the power and prestige associated with a specific language. The percentage of Kashmiri used in the home context is a highly code-mixed variety with more lexical items from Urdu. Urdu, which has dominated the medium of education, is still dominant despite state patronage to Kashmiri, which has hardly any space as the preferred medium of education. The fact that most respondents were unable to write in Kashmiri, whereas all of the educated respondents were proficient in Urdu, shows how closely Urdu is associated with literacy, prestige, and education. In addition to other covert causes, the generation gap, growing literacy rate, and prestige associated with Urdu are some of the foremost reasons for the change in language roles. As the usage of Urdu in various contexts expands, children will get fewer opportunities to listen to and speak the Kashmiri language, which will ultimately contribute to the attrition and loss of Kashmiri at the phonologic, lexical, syntactic, and semantic levels. From a functional perspective, Urdu not only dominates consciously controlled functions such as counting, praying, and kinship calling but also spontaneous and involuntary linguistic operations such as dreaming and thinking, and personal activities such as praying.

In contemporary Kashmir, there are two crucial issues regarding the persistence of Urdu/Kashmiri linguistic identity. On the one hand, there are some Kashmiris who believe that a language is of no use if it cannot promise economic security and help people reshape their future. According to them, those who advocate for Kashmiri culture and language do not even teach their own children Kashmiri. They consider any sort of advocacy for the Kashmiri language a hidden ideology, arguing that those Kashmiris who encourage other people to use Kashmiri do so because they

do not want others to prosper or compete. On the other hand, there are some Kashmiris, including the separatists, who contend that Urdu and Kashmiri shape their different identities—Kashmiri is part of their cultural identity, Urdu shapes their political personality, and Urdu and Kashmiri supplement each other. However, some Kashmiris critically argue that in Jammu and Kashmir, ideologically motivated narratives are being woven to impose Urdu on them and to rob Kashmir of its cultural and civilisational identity. According to them, there are people who advertently or inadvertently support this campaign against Kashmiri as a part of a major colonial project to make Kashmiris unconscious of their separate Kashmiri identity, such that they will merge with larger spaces of the national mainstream of India. It appears that they want to save themselves from drowning in the vast ocean of 'Indianness' with its unanticipated and undesirable consequences. Nonetheless, ultimately, Urdu has emerged in Kashmir as a favourable project for the separatists as well as for the state of India.

In Kashmir, Urdu also dominates writing, publishing, and readership practices. Discussing the importance of Urdu writing and literacy, Shah contends that for a person literate in Urdu, it is easy to become literate in Kashmiri—it takes only one day's hard work to learn the Kashmiri script. For an Urdu literate, it is also easy to learn Persian and Arabic. Thus, serving Urdu is one of the best ways to serve Kashmiri and would help preserve the essence of the Arabic-Persian legacy and thus the spirit of these literatures. However, the choice of language for writing purposes may involve a host of religious, political, and social factors, and hence, is not determined simply by the scientific aspects of orthography. Presently, there are at least three different sections of Kashmiri society advocating three different scripts for the Kashmiri language. The major section constitutes Kashmiri writers (mostly Muslim) for whom Perso-Arabic script for Kashmiri is simple, good, most accommodative, and scientific. The second group consists of people (mostly Hindus) who migrated from Kashmir during the early nineties with the onset of the separatist movement. They advocate for Devanagari script for Kashmiri and thus the literature they publish in Kashmiri is in Devanagari script. The third group—though small and mostly comprising the younger generation from both religious groups—advocates Roman script for the Kashmiri language, which they consider the only solution to save the Kashmiri language in today's times of microelectronics and information technology. They substantiate their argument by highlighting the case of the Turkish language reformation by Kemal Atatürk.

Language shift, according to Edwards, often reflects a pragmatic desire for social mobility and an improved standard of living. While exploring the role played by language preferences, that is, attitudinal/motivational endorsements of a given set of languages, it was observed that more positive attitudes are being associated with Urdu than with Kashmiri, which eventually lead to pragmatic motivations for the acquisition and maintenance of Urdu and to the loss of the Kashmiri language. More importantly, Urdu is preferred over Kashmiri as it is seen to perform both integrative and instrumental functions. English is another language that Kashmiris want to learn, because of its global appeal. However, it is chosen primarily for instrumental reasons. Drawing a distinction between integrative and instrumental functions in Kashmir, Shah argues that English has served to alienate Kashmiris from their culture and religion.

However, as in other speech communities, microelectronic communication technology and the dominance of English have had their impact on the Kashmiri speech community too. As observed from this study, people in Kashmir do not expect Kashmiri to be used in the latest modes of communication, such as SMS, email, or in cyberspace. Nevertheless, recently (February, 2008), the world's largest cyber company, Google, initiated an active web page (http/labs. google. co. in) for students and scholars of Kashmiri (http://labs.google.co.in/keyboards/kashmiri.html) across the world, making it easier for them to access information on the web. A similar attempt was made by the Department of Linguistics of the University of Kashmir that successfully launched a trilingual (Kashmiri-Hindi-English) dictionary, which can be accessed online: http://www.kashmirizaban.com/index.php/dictionary/kdic.

Interestingly, attrition is not restricted to indigenous Kashmiri speakers but applies across the diaspora, whether in India or abroad, wherever the language is undergoing gradual attrition due to the impact of the languages of wider communication, mainly Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, and English. The resultant language shift or the acquisition of a dominant language that is more functionally relevant in contemporary contexts will ultimately result in the 'death' of Kashmiri. Bhatt's study of Kashmiris in Delhi (1989) showed that in the majority of diasporic families, one can see a gradual and visible decay and death of the Kashmiri language. Similarly, a study conducted by Koul (1997) revealed that the use of Kashmiri in the younger generation of the diaspora has declined substantially. He observed that children do not use Kashmiri even with other Kashmiri children or teachers in school, do not watch/listen to Kashmiri music programmes, and do not read and write in Kashmiri. Koul further noted that educated children prefer to use English/Hindi in communicating with other children

and that Kashmiri is not used at the workplace. Koul conducted research on language attrition among the Kashmiri community within the country and found that there is a loss of vocabulary related to culture-bound items, architecture, and environment that are no longer in use outside the Kashmir Valley. Similarly, children in the community do not understand the use of idioms, proverbs, or literary terms in Kashmiri. Koul finally concluded that this decline in the use of Kashmiri by the younger generation would deepen the identity crisis of the Kashmiri community settled outside Kashmir.

The other major factors that have favoured the maintenance and growth of Urdu in Kashmir include religious discourse, state language policies, and the separatist movement. Islam accords greater importance to texts/scriptures than to oral tradition, and therefore, for Muslims, the language of their religion acquires special significance. In other words, for Muslims, religion and language are closely related to each other, as the sacredness of religion is claimed to be inherited through religious texts/scriptures. Thus, the language used in religious texts/scriptures becomes a symbol/ part of religious identity. Hence, it is difficult to acquire religious training without knowing the language. In Kashmir, as far as religious discourse is concerned, Urdu dominates entirely, whether the activity is praying or conceptualising religious scriptures. People associate their religious identity with the Urdu language; as one Kashmiri gentleman, M. M. Shah, said, "Our identity—religious-intellectual identity—is linked not only to Kashmiri but to Urdu as well" (*The Greater Kashmir*). The additional affinity of Islam with Urdu happens to come from the script similarity shared with the Arabic language. Thus, Urdu is considered as sacred as Arabic and is symbolically associated with Muslim culture and identity.

In South Asian countries, there has always been a nexus between language and religion. As discussed earlier, religious discourses have overtly or covertly supported Urdu by providing Urdu translations of all the major Islamic texts, including the holy Koran. Like in other parts of South Asia, most people in Kashmir are unable to understand the original Arabic texts. Therefore, they use Urdu translations and interpretations to understand them. This has ultimately created a religious affiliation with the Urdu language. Urdu is also seen as a symbol of pan-Islamic identity within the sub-continent. Walter Lawrence pointed out that there was a time when the preachers of the famous *Jamia Masjid* (grand mosque) never spoke in any other language but Kashmiri, but in recent times, some people also give speeches in Urdu. For instance, after his return from

London, the separatist leader Umar Farooq gave a speech in Urdu in the same *Masjid*.

Similarly, the state has failed to take concrete steps towards the maintenance of the Kashmiri language, although from time to time, different regimes took some ostensible steps in favour of Kashmiri. However, they were all bound to fail—without a clear vision for language policy, they remained only at the level of planning. In the broader space, the Indian State has already accepted Kashmiri as one of the major languages in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. The Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, India's premier language institute, started a project for many Indian languages, including Kashmiri, to make them accessible online with auto-instructional methods. However, this was stopped in the year 2003 due to unknown reasons. In 1960, the Law Ministry of the Government of India sought to translate the Constitution of India into Kashmiri. For this, however, the 'script controversy' came to the fore again, as they wanted it to be written in the Devanagari script. From 1967 to 1968, the Law Ministry had reportedly moved a proposal for the translation of the Constitution of India into Kashmiri. But the Ministry failed to find a person who was well-versed in the language and the law. The lack of a full-fledged translation division in Kashmir compounded the problem. In August 1975, Sheikh Abdullah decided to create a translation division in Srinagar, in accordance with the Official Languages Act passed by the Parliament of India; but the decision was never implemented. Some years ago, the Law Ministry picked G. N. Gowhar, a retired Sessions Judge, to translate the Constitution. On February 5, 2007, he submitted the translated work to the Ministry; however, since then, the Ministry has not published it. The then secretary in the Ministry had objected to the script used in the document and was demanding its translation into the Devanagari script. The issue has now turned political, with the state Congress Chief, Prof Saifudin Soz, conveying to the Ministry of Law that the Jammu and Kashmiri Academy has approved only the Persian script and "it alone is in vogue". "Therefore, it is imperative that the Kashmiri translation of the Constitution of India must be produced in the Persian script alone", Saifudin Soz has thus told the Ministry in a communiqué. But the issue has larger implications, beyond the translation of the Constitution. Noted litterateur Muhammad Yousuf Taing describes the demand for the Devanagari script as part of the cultural aggression on Kashmir. The Perso-Arabic script has been brought here by Hazrat Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, and no Kashmiri would imagine giving up the script as it is a part of Kashmiris' cultural-religious identity, argues Taing. He says that any demand to abandon the script would be viewed as an attack on

Kashmiri culture. One more effort from the central government in favour of the Kashmiri language was the launch of *DD Kashmir*—a radio channel in the name of the Kashmiri language; however it gives less time slots to Kashmiri programmes, and more time to programmes in Hindi, Urdu and/or other languages.

In the field of politics, most leaders use Urdu to deliver speeches. Recently, in the year 2008, the state government advertised for the posts of revenue officials, and knowledge of Urdu was the main criterion for the job. In the assembly elections of 2008, National Conference, the leading political party, mentioned in its manifesto that it would promote Urdu. Similarly, another political party, the Indian National Congress, published its manifesto in Urdu, and according to the state Congress party president, Saifudin Soz, "People enjoyed reading it in Urdu". Moreover, in the legislative assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, most of the members took their oath in Urdu. All court proceedings and revenue and police records are employing Urdu as the medium of communication.

The two-decade-old separatist movement has also directly and indirectly nurtured the use of Urdu. First, the separatist movement and its ideological, cultural, and religious constructs of Kashmir and its people have further weakened the case for the support and promotion of the Kashmiri language as an exponent of *Kashmiriyat*. All printed materials related to the movement, the constitution, proceedings of the meetings, press releases, notifications, pamphlets, slogans, names of the organisations, speeches in public places and mosques are available in Urdu. One separatist leader clearly announced in a public meeting that "Urdu is our language; it is our identity, and Urdu is our future". However, the conclusion that can be drawn from interviews with some of the separatist leaders is that they are not very clear about what the language policy of independent Kashmir (as they imagine it) would be. This may be compared to the Punjab separatist movement that had a clear language policy of promoting the Punjabi language in the Gurmukhi script. Second, the movement brought almost six lakh security forces to Kashmir, who primarily communicate with the Kashmiri people in Hindi/Hindustani, which is mutually intelligible with Urdu. In remote rural areas, the security forces communicate even with the older and illiterate people in Hindustani/Urdu, who try to reply in broken Urdu/Hindustani. In this way, several people (for example, shopkeepers) who constantly interact with the security forces have learnt spoken Hindustani/Urdu.

Another important factor in the flourishing of Urdu in Kashmir is the media; specifically, Urdu journalism. Presently, besides the cities of Srinagar and Jammu, various Urdu dailies, weeklies, fortnightlies,

monthlies, journals, and periodicals are being published in every town of the state. Urdu journalism and media have had due impact in changing proper names, place names, and kinship-calling among the Kashmiri speech community. Furthermore, Kashmir has become a highly accommodative place for labourers and for skilled and unskilled workers from other states of India. These workers generally communicate with most of the Kashmiri people in broken Hindustani. This exercise, implicitly or explicitly, has also facilitated the growth of Urdu in Kashmir.

Apart from the theoretical background and the importance of linguistic identities, the crucial reasons for accepting the Kashmiri language as the state's official language are noteworthy. Safeguarding the Kashmiri language and furthering its prospects do not necessarily mean having to do so at the cost of other languages. In fact, proficiency in Urdu/English can be an advantage to Kashmiris, which needs to be encouraged. The fact remains that only those languages flourish that have a strong national and civilisational force at their foundation.

In a state of lost nationhood, artisans, poets, musicians, writers, scholars, and intellectuals cease to share any sense of belonging with their language and culture. Taking refuge in a non-native language stems from an inferiority complex, low self-esteem, a sense of collective guilt, and a lack of national dignity and pride. At the collective level, the common Kashmiri psyche abhors everything that is traditional and native, as this is stigmatised. The lexicon and poetry of Kashmiri language are more pluralistic and inclusive in nature. It appears that they want to save themselves from drowning in a vast ocean of 'Indianness' with its unanticipated and possibly undesirable consequences.

Recent scholarly debates and predictions of language death in South Asia and beyond have shown that a host of culturally and linguistically diverse human languages are in critical stages of endangerment, decay, and ultimate demise. The prediction is that in the present century, the world will witness the last words of fifty percent of the estimated six thousand of the world's languages. This language extinction will be proportionately shared by India's almost three hundred and eighty languages. What then is the future of the Kashmiri language? A short answer according to Kachru is, "Language, culture and identity loss, and at the end, the winds of change will pull the last roots (of the Kashmiri language) out that bind Kashmiris to a five-millennium-old history and culture". Finally, it might completely obliterate the last mark of the Kashmiri identity if concrete steps are not taken to safeguard the Kashmiri language. More significantly, it should serve as a language of both instrumental and integrative purposes; otherwise, it will remain only for

symbolic reification, where one would make ironical claims that "I am a Kashmiri but I can't speak Kashmiri".

In the contemporary Kashmir, there exists a situation of 'digraphia' where the Muslim and the Hindu Kashmiris view the script/s) of the same language through their respective religious predispositions and ideologies. Muslims favour Perso-Arabic script to explicate and assert themselves with the culture and identity associated with this script, whereas the indigenous and the Hindu diaspora community prefer Devanagari script, thereby asserting a specific identity associated with it. The Kashmiri language has always been a binding force between the two communities; however, there are apprehensions that this script uncertainty might play a dividing role, if not adjudicated by essentially keeping the feelings of both communities in mind.

## 6.6. Limitations

A study of language shift has many aspects to it, such as the nature of the shift, the context and causes of the shift, the direction and speed of the change, the speed of the shift in different contexts, and the implications of the shift for language, attrition, identity, and culture. This study was an exploratory one that attempted to indicate that in the Kashmiri speech community, Urdu is increasingly replacing Kashmiri in various domains. There is also an increasing acceptance of English, though its use is relatively confined to jobs in the formal sector. From this perspective, English does not pose as big a threat to Kashmiri as Urdu does. In order to examine the shift, this study used the social scientific method of a cross-sectional survey and qualitative observations. However, this study has certain limitations.

First, a study about attrition requires a longitudinal or diachronic approach. It should explore changes in the linguistic behaviour of people at several points in time. However, due to various constraints of time and logistics, this could not be done. Second, the researcher could not make use of authentic official documents of the state's language policies. Kashmir is a politically sensitive area of India, so it is almost impossible for a social science student to procure official documents. The third limitation is that the sample size was not large enough to permit the use of advanced statistical techniques. The researcher wanted to use the methods of logistic regression and factor analysis to explore the data structure but the small size of the sample did not permit this.

## 6.7. Future Directions

The present work focused on the language shift currently taking place in the Kashmiri speech community. It raised several pertinent questions—in the near future, linguists may find it interesting to explore some of them in more detail. Some of the major issues include the following questions: Are the Kashmiris in Kashmir ready to give up their distinct linguistic, cultural, historical, and political identity in favour of an 'Urduised' pan-Islamic community of South Asia? Do they want to protect their unique Kashmiri identity? If they are not ready to give up their unique identity, how will they use Urdu, English, and Kashmiri simultaneously? Will they use English at the workplace, Urdu at home, and Kashmiri for endogenous knowledge or in the cultural arena? Other relevant questions are: When the state, from which the majority seems to be alienated, attempts to revitalise Kashmiri without honest commitment, does it create a reaction among people in favour of Urdu? Can the various threats to Kashmiri bring Hindus and Muslims together to evolve a consensus regarding the script, lexicon, genealogical classification, and other matters pertaining to the language?

On the methodological front, the development of rigorous psycholinguistic and neurolinguistic scales is required for the measurement of linguistic identity and language use. Further, there is a need to explore attrition among the community by adopting better (psycholinguistic, socio-cognitive and neurolinguistic) scales and methods. Moreover, the nature and role of context in the language acquisition process needs to be investigated. A study similar to the present one can also be repeated on a larger, representative sample, like a multistage sample or a theoretical sample, so that the results can be generalised and a causal statistical analysis can be attempted.

It may be noted here that so far, Kashmiri folk literature has not been studied in depth. Thus, there is wide scope for research in the different genres of Kashmiri folk literature, specifically, proverbs, idioms, rhymes, and fairy tales. It is interesting to note that among the younger generation, Urdu phonology has also influenced the phonetic features of Kashmiri. While speaking Kashmiri, they 'Urduise' many Kashmiri sounds by mixing/replacing the phonetic and phonological features of Urdu with phonemes of Kashmiri. This needs more investigation, especially in terms of exploring the impact of the phonetic and phonological features of Urdu on the native Kashmiri lexical items.

# APPENDICES

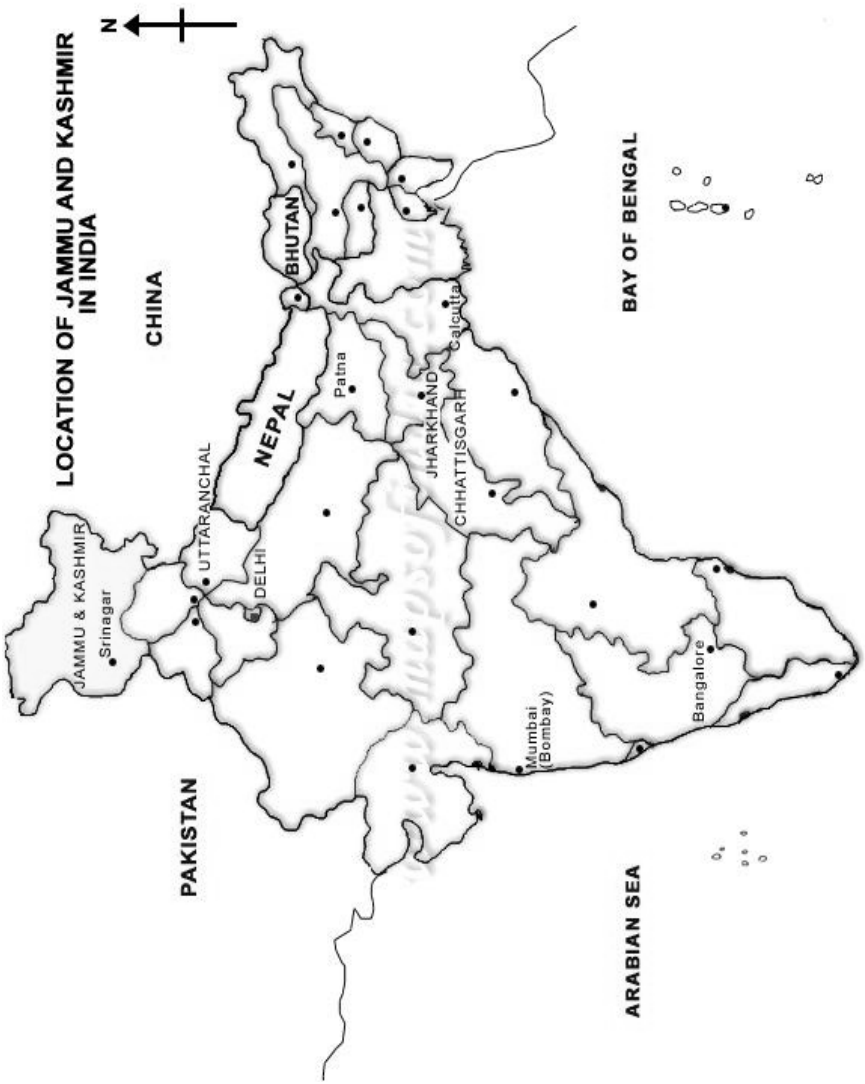
## Appendix A: Respondents' Background Characteristics

| Background Characteristics | Percentage | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| **Age** | | |
| 18–29 | 30.9 | 34 |
| 30–49 | 48.2 | 53 |
| 50 and above | 20.9 | 23 |
| *Total* | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 50.9 | 56 |
| Female | 49.1 | 54 |
| Total | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Place of Residence** | | |
| Rural | 57.3 | 63 |
| Urban | 42.7 | 47 |
| *Total* | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Income (Rs. per month)** | | |
| Up to 8000 | 59.1 | 65 |
| 8000 and above | 40.9 | 45 |
| *Total* | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Occupation** | | |
| Teacher | 38.3 | 42 |
| Govt Job | 23.6 | 26 |
| Student | 13.6 | 15 |
| Others* | 24.5 | 27 |
| *Total* | 100.0 | 110 |

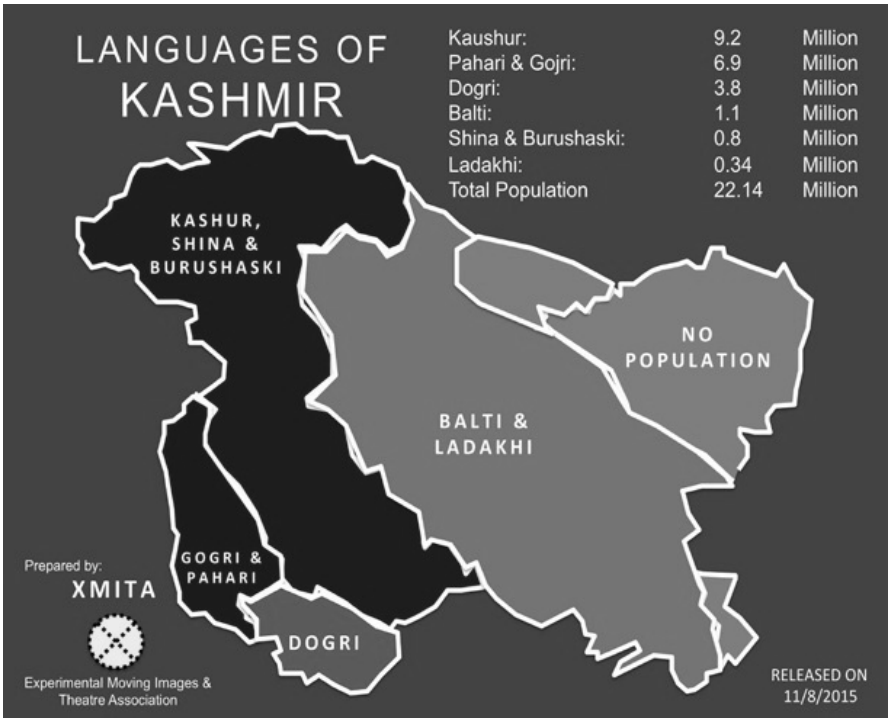
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Education** | | |
| Secondary | 12.8 | 14 |
| Up to 12th | 13.6 | 15 |
| Graduation | 22.7 | 25 |
| Masters and above | 50.9 | 56 |
| *Total* | 100.0 | 110 |
| **Type of schooling** | | |
| Government | 66.4 | 73 |
| Private | 33.6 | 37 |
| *Total* | 100.0 | 110 |

*Businessmen, manual workers, and homemakers

## Appendix B: Map of Jammu and Kashmir—Geographical Location and Adjacent Areas



## Appendix C: Linguistic Map of Kashmir (Source: XMITA, http://www.xmita.org/)



## Appendix D: Correlation of Age and Gender in the Context of Language Acquisition

| | Kashmiri | | Urdu | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Home | Peer group and others | School | Home and others |
| **Age** | | | | |
| 18-29 | 67.6 | 32.4 | 26.5 | 73.5 |
| 30-49 | 57.7 | 42.3 | 32.1 | 67.9 |
| 50 and above | 52.2 | 47.8 | 31.8 | 68.2 |
| Total | 59.6 | 40.4 | 30.3 | 69.7 |
| **Gender** | | | | |
| Male | 57.1 | 42.9 | 32.7 | 67.3 |
| Female | 62.3 | 37.7 | 27.8 | 72.2 |
| Total | 59.6 | 40.4 | 30.3 | 69.7 |

# Appendix E: List of Kashmiri Consonants

| | Bilabial | Labio-dental | Alveolar-dental | Retroflex | Palatal | Velar | Glottal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Stops** | | | | | | | |
| Voiceless Unaspirated | **P** | | **T** | **T** | | **k** | |
| Voiceless Aspirated | **pH** | | **tH** | **TH** | | **kH** | |
| Voiced | **B** | | **D** | **D** | | **g** | |
| **Affricates** | | | | | | | |
| Voiceless Unaspirated | | | **Ts** | | **č** | | |
| Voiceless Aspirated | | | **tsH** | | **čH** | | |
| Voiced | | | | | **j** | | |
| **Nasals** | | | | | | | |
| Voiced | **M** | | **N** | | | | |
| **Fricatives** | | | | | | | |
| Voiceless | | | **S** | | **š** | | **H** |
| Voiced | | | **Z** | | | | |
| **Lateral (Voiced)** | | | **L** | | | | |
| **Trill (Voiced)** | | | **R** | | | | |
| **Flap (Voiced)** | | | **R** | | | | |
| **Glides (Voiced)** | | **V** | | | **y** | | |

# Appendix F: List of Kashmiri Vowels

| | Front Unrounded | | Central Unrounded | | Back Rounded | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **High** | **i** | **i:** | **ɨ** | **ɨ:** | **u** | **u:** |
| **Mid** | **e** | | **ə** | **ə:** | | |
| **Lower Mid** | **e:** | | **a** | | **o** | **O** |
| **Low** | | | **a:** | | **ɔ** | |

## Appendix G: Dominance of Urdu Signboards in Kashmir

# Appendix H: Newspapers Published in Kashmir

| S. No | Name of the Newspaper | Language | Circulation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The Greater Kashmir | English | Daily |
| 2 | Mirror of Kashmir | English | Daily |
| 3 | Kashmir Observer | English | Daily |
| 4 | Kashmir Monitor | English | Daily |
| 5 | Alsafa | Urdu & English | Daily |
| 6 | Kashmir Images | English | Daily |
| 7 | Srinagar Times | Urdu | Daily |
| 8 | Daily Etalaat | Urdu | Daily |
| 9 | Rising Kashmir | English | Daily |
| 10 | Khadmat | Urdu & English | Daily |
| 11 | Daily Aftab | Urdu & English | Daily |
| 12 | Kashmir Uzma | Urdu | Daily |
| 13 | Nedi-e-Mashrik | Urdu | Daily |
| 14 | Wadi Ki Awaz | Urdu | Daily |
| 15 | Tamile Irshaad | Urdu | Daily |
| 16 | Shahab | Urdu | Weekly |
| 17 | Uqaab | Urdu | Daily |
| 18 | Qumi Wakar | Urdu | Weekly |
| 19 | Chatan | Urdu | Weekly |
| 20 | Rahmat | English | Daily |
| 21 | Al Akhbar | Urdu | Daily |
| 22 | Srinagar News | Urdu | Daily |
| 23 | Mashrik | Urdu | Daily |
| 24 | Roshni | Urdu | Daily |
| 24 | Hilal-e-now | Urdu | Weekly |
| 25 | Sangarmal | Kashmiri | Weekly |
| 26 | Koshur Akhbar | Kashmiri | Daily |
| 27 | Ahetisaab | Urdu | Weekly |
| 28 | Hamdard | Urdu | Daily |
| 29 | Zameendar | Urdu | Daily |
| 30 | Mission Kashmir | Urdu | Daily |
| 31 | Srinagar Mail | Urdu | Daily |
| 32 | Etlaat | Urdu | Daily |

# Appendix I: Urdu Journals/Magazines in Kashmir (to which People in Kashmir Subscribe)

| *S. No* | *Name of the Journal/Magazine* | *S. No* | *Name of the Journal/Magazine* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *1* | *Aajkal* | *13* | *Khatoon-E-Mashriq* |
| *2* | *Al Risala* | *14* | *Nasheman* |
| *3* | *Ausaaf Urdu* | *15* | *Nawa-E-Adab* |
| *4* | *Bishwin Sadi* | *16* | *Naya Daur* |
| *5* | *Dastak* | *17* | *Naya Safar* |
| *6* | *Dastakhat* | *18* | *Pakeeza Anchal* |
| *7* | *Fikr-0-Nazar* | *19* | *Payam-E-Urdu* |
| *8* | *Fikr-O-Tahqeeq* | *20* | *Qaumi Mahaz* |
| *9* | *Hidayat* | *21* | *Huda* |
| *10* | *Huma* | *22* | *Insha* |
| *11* | *Ilm-O-Adab* | *23* | *Iqbal Review* |
| *12* | *Hamari Zaban* | *24* | *Kitabnuma* |

## Appendix J: Correlation of Age, Gender, Residence, with Richness Associated with Kashmiri

| Age | Richness Associated with the Kashmiri Language (%) |
|---|---|
| 18–29 | 5.9 |
| 30–49 | 9.4 |
| 50 and above | 17.4 |
| **Gender** | |
| Male | 12.5 |
| Female | 7.4 |
| **Place of Residence** | |
| Rural | 7.9 |
| Urban | 12.8 |

# Appendix K: Respondents' Feelings While Speaking Certain Languages

| Feeling(s) | Language(s) | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kashmiri | Urdu | English | Both Urdu and English | Percent | Number |
| Comfortable | 39.1 | 30.9 | 5.0 | 25.0 | 100.0 | 110 |
| Uncomfortable | 9.3 | 3.1 | 44.3 | 43.3 | 100.0 | 97 |
| Socially Superior | 15.6 | 14.7 | 48.6 | 21.1 | 100.0 | 109 |
| Socially Inferior | 48.5 | - | - | 39.7* | 100.0 | 68 |
| Proud/Good | 11.5 | 32.6 | 38.2 | 17.7 | 100.0 | 108 |

# NOTES

[1] Identity theft may be used to facilitate crimes such as illegal immigration, terrorism, and espionage. It may also be used as blackmail. Cases of 'identity cloning' to attack payment systems have also been noted. Presently, the most common form of identity theft is credit card identity theft, passport identity theft, and internet identity theft, that is, the use of a fake internet identity for different purposes. Recently, in March 2008, the British Government ordered that 'compulsory identity cards' must be issued to people of non-European Union countries, as part of the British government's plans to improve security and to prevent identity theft and fraud.

[2] The Activation Threshold Hypothesis predicts that: (1) language disuse gradually leads to language loss; (2) the most frequently used elements of an L2 will tend to replace their (less used) L1 counterparts; and, (3) comprehension will be retained longer than production because self-activation requires a lower threshold than does comprehension. Thus, over time, attrition first affects words and frozen expressions, followed by morphosyntax. In a nutshell, attrition is the result of a long-term lack of stimulation.

[3] In her bestseller *Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language* (1989), the Polish-American author Eva Hoffman told the story of her own long and difficult process of becoming bicultural and bilingual. In her case, the acquisition of an L2 and the adoption of a new culture coincided with the attrition of the L1 and a kind of release from her original culture and selfhood.

[4] Parihaspura was the capital of the famous King Lalitadatiya; he ruled from AD 724 to 761.

[5] Pandit Anand Koul was a historian. He published his first book, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, in 1924; a pioneering work on the history and ethnography of Kashmiri Pandits.

[6] Typologically, Kashmiri belongs to the SVO word-order of languages and resembles German, Dutch, Yiddish, and a few others. These languages form a distinct set of languages know as verb-second (V2) languages. In such languages, any constituent of the sentence can precede the verb; hence, they are different from verb-middle languages such as English.

[7] Lal Ded, also known as Lalarifa and Lalleshwari, a mystic Kashmiri woman, was the first popular and authentic poetess in Kashmiri. She lived in Kashmir during AD 1300. Her verses are sung in Kashmir even today.

[8] Pāli is the language of the Ashokan edicts and of the scriptures of Theravada Buddhism, and (the Pāli Canon or the Tipitaka in Pāli), which were written in Sri Lanka during the first century. Pāli has been written in a variety of scripts, including Brahmi.

[9] Also known as Sarada or Sarda, the Sharda script is a writing system of the Brahmic family of scripts, developed in Kashmir during the 8th century. It is closely related to and predates Devanagari. It is rarely used now, except by some Kashmiri pandits, to write horoscopes. The Sharda script of Bakshali, which was first discovered in the Bakshali village in the North-West Frontier Province (now in Pakistan), is considered the oldest known script used to write in Kashmiri.

[10] It was Sultan-Shag-Us-Din (AD 1350–1374) who gave official status to the Persian language.

[11] These verses have been collected in the form of a book called the *Rishi-Namah* or *Nur-Namah*.

[12] He was awarded the Indian Sahitya Akademi Award in 1961 for his poetry collection *Nawroz-i-Saba*, the Padma Shri in 2000, and India's highest literary award, the Jnanpith Award (for the year 2004), in 2007. Incidentally, he is the first Kashmiri writer to be awarded the Jnanpith.

[13] Amir Khusrau Dehlavi (AD 1253–1325), a prolific classical poet, was associated with the royal courts of more than seven rulers of the Delhi Sultanate. Hundreds of playful riddles, songs, and legends were attributed to him. Through his enormous literary output and legendary folk personality, Khusrau represents one of the first (recorded) Indian personages with a true multi-cultural or pluralistic identity.

[14] The name 'Urdu' seems to have been used for the first time around 1780; before that, it was called 'Rekhta'.

[15] *Nikah Namah* or 'marriage agreement' is a solemn and sacred social contract (in written form) between bride and groom.

[16] 'Bollywood' is the informal term popularly used for the Hindi film industry based in Mumbai, India. It is the largest centre of film production in India and one of the largest in the world. The name is a portmanteau of Bombay (the former name for Mumbai) and Hollywood (the centre of the American film industry). The term 'Bollywood' originated in the 1970s, when India overtook America as the world's largest producer of films. The frequent use of poetic Urdu words is fairly common in Bollywood.

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